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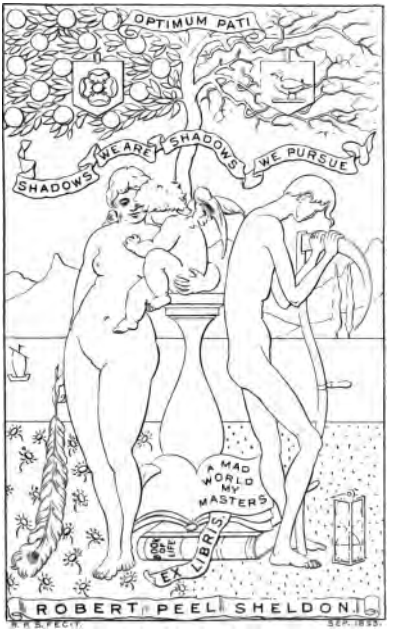
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PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

[illegible] meditation, [illegible] [illegible] prospect of the sea-coast, [illegible] [illegible] success upon what they rested, he beheld beside him the little dumb maiden, offer Fenella?

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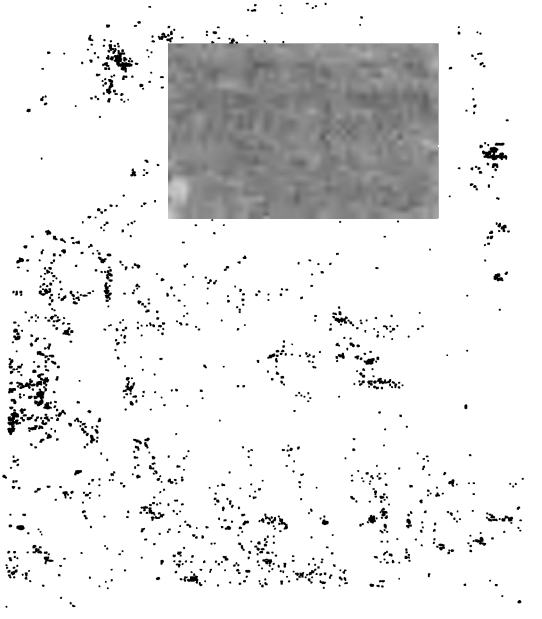

WAVERLEY NOVELS

VOL. XXX.

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

D. Wilkie. Chas. Fox.

"The dwarf imparted to Peveril a volume similar to that which formed his own studies, one of Scuderi's now forgotten romances, of which Geoffrey Hudson was a great admirer."

EDINBURGH

THE

WAVERLEY NOVELS

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

VOL. XXX.

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.—III.

EDINBURGH:
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK.
1860.

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PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FIRST.

I fear the devil worst when gown and cassock,
Or, in the lack of them, old Calvin's cloak,
Conceals his cloven hoof.

ANONYMOUS.

JULIAN PEVERIL had scarce set sail for Whitehaven, when Alice Bridgenorth and her governante, at the hasty command of her father, were embarked with equal speed and secrecy on board of a bark bound for Liverpool. Christian accompanied them on their voyage, as the friend to whose guardianship Alice was to be consigned during any future separation from her father, and whose amusing conversation, joined to his pleasing though cold manners, as well as his near relationship, induced Alice, in her forlorn situation, to consider her fate as fortunate in having such a guardian.

At Liverpool, as the reader already knows, Christian took the first overt step in the villany which he had contrived against the innocent girl, by exposing her at a meeting-house to the unhallowed gaze of Chiffinch, in order to convince him she was possessed of such uncommon beauty as might well deserve the infamous promotion to which they meditated to raise her.

Highly satisfied with her personal appearance, Chiffinch was no less so with the sense and delicacy of her conversation, when he met her in company with her uncle afterwards in London. The simplicity, and at the same time the spirit of her remarks, made him regard her as his scientific attendant the cook might have done a newly invented sauce, sufficiently *piquante* in its qualities to awaken the jaded appetite of a cloyed and gorged epicure. She was, he said and swore, the very corner-stone on which, with proper management, and with his instructions, a few honest fellows might build a Court fortune.

That the necessary introduction might take place, the confederates judged fit she should be put under the charge of an experienced lady, whom some called Mistress Chiffinch, and others Chiffinch's mistress — one of those obliging creatures who are willing to discharge all the duties of a wife, without the inconvenient and indissoluble ceremony.

It was one, and not perhaps the least prejudicial consequence of the license of that ill-governed time, that the bounds betwixt virtue and vice were so far

smoothed down and levelled, that the frail wife, or the tender friend who was no wife, did not necessarily lose their place in society; but, on the contrary, if they moved in the higher circles, were permitted and encouraged to mingle with women whose rank was certain, and whose reputation was untainted.

A regular *liaison*, like that of Chiffinch and his fair one, inferred little scandal; and such was his influence, as prime minister of his master's pleasures, that, as Charles himself expressed it, the lady whom we introduced to our readers in the last chapter, had obtained a brevet commission to rank as a married woman. And to do the gentle dame justice, no wife could have been more attentive to forward his plans, or more liberal in disposing of his income.

She inhabited a set of apartments called Chiffinch's —the scene of many an intrigue, both of love and politics; and where Charles often held his private parties for the evening, when, as frequently happened, the ill-humour of the Duchess of Portsmouth, his reigning Sultana, prevented his supping with her. The hold which such an arrangement gave a man like Chiffinch, used as he well knew how to use it, made him of too much consequence to be slighted even by the first persons in the state, unless they stood aloof from all manner of politics and Court intrigue.

In the charge of Mistress Chiffinch, and of him whose name she bore, Edward Christian placed the daughter of his sister, and of his confiding friend, calmly contemplating her ruin as an event certain to

follow; and hoping to ground upon it his own chance of a more assured fortune, than a life spent in intrigue had hitherto been able to procure for him.

The innocent Alice, without being able to discover what was wrong either in the scenes of unusual luxury with which she was surrounded, or in the manners of her hostess, which, both from nature and policy, were kind and caressing—felt nevertheless an instinctive apprehension that all was not right—a feeling in the human mind, allied, perhaps, to that sense of danger which animals exhibit when placed in the vicinity of the natural enemies of their race, and which makes birds cower when the hawk is in the air, and beasts tremble when the tiger is abroad in the desert. There was a heaviness at her heart which she could not dispel; and the few hours which she had already spent at Chiffinch's were like those passed in prison by one unconscious of the cause or event of his captivity. It was the third morning after her arrival in London, that the scene took place which we now recur to.

The impertinence and vulgarity of Empson, which was permitted to him as an unrivalled performer upon his instrument, were exhausting themselves at the expense of all other musical professors, and Mistress Chiffinch was listening with careless indifference, when some one was heard speaking loudly, and with animation, in the inner apartment.

"O gemini and gilliflower water!" exclaimed the damsel, startled out of her fine airs into her natural vulgarity of exclamation, and running to the door of

communication—"if he has not come back again after all!—and if old Rowley——"

A tap at the farther and opposite door here arrested her attention—she quitted the handle of that which she was about to open as speedily as if it had burnt her fingers, and, moving back towards her couch, asked, "Who is there?"

"Old Rowley himself, madam," said the King, entering the apartment with his usual air of easy composure.

"O crimini!—your Majesty!—I thought——"

"That I was out of hearing, doubtless," said the King; "and spoke of me as folks speak of absent friends. Make no apology. I think I have heard ladies say of their lace, that a rent is better than a darn.—Nay, be seated.—Where is Chiffinch?"

"He is down at York-House, your Majesty," said the dame, recovering, though with no small difficulty, the calm affectation of her usual demeanour. "Shall I send your Majesty's commands?"

"I will wait his return," said the King.—"Permit me to taste your chocolate."

"There is some fresh frothed in the office," said the lady; and using a little silver call, or whistle, a black boy, superbly dressed, like an Oriental page, with gold bracelets on his naked arms, and a gold collar around his equally bare neck, attended with the favourite beverage of the morning, in an apparatus of the richest china.

While he sipped his cup of chocolate, the King

looked round the apartment, and observing Fenella, Peveril, and the musician, who remained standing beside a large Indian screen, he continued, addressing Mistress Chiffinch, though with polite indifference, "I sent you the fiddles this morning—or rather the flute —Empson, and a fairy elf whom I met in the Park, who dances divinely. She has brought us the very newest saraband from the Court of Queen Mab, and I sent her here, that you may see it at leisure."

"Your Majesty does me by far too much honour," said Chiffinch, her eyes properly cast down, and her accents minced into becoming humility.

"Nay, little Chiffinch," answered the King, in a tone of as contemptuous familiarity as was consistent with his good-breeding, "it was not altogether for thine own private ear, though quite deserving of all sweet sounds; but I thought Nelly had been with thee this morning."

"I can send Bajazet for her, your Majesty," answered the lady.

"Nay, I will not trouble your little heathen Sultan to go so far. Still it strikes me that Chiffinch said you had company—some country cousin, or such a matter—Is there not such a person?"

"There is a young person from the country," said Mistress Chiffinch, striving to conceal a considerable portion of embarrassment; "but she is unprepared for such an honour as to be admitted into your Majesty's presence, and——"

"And therefore the fitter to receive it, Chiffinch.

There is nothing in nature so beautiful as the first blush of a little rustic between joy and fear, and wonder and curiosity. It is the down on the peach—pity it decays so soon!—the fruit remains, but the first high colouring and exquisite flavour are gone.—Never put up thy lip for the matter, Chiffinch, for it is as I tell you; so pray let us have *la belle cousine.*"

Mistress Chiffinch, more embarrassed than ever, again advanced towards the door of communication, which she had been in the act of opening when his Majesty entered. But just as she coughed pretty loudly, perhaps as a signal to some one within, voices were again heard in a raised tone of altercation—the door was flung open, and Alice rushed out of the inner apartment, followed to the door of it by the enterprising Duke of Buckingham, who stood fixed with astonishment on finding his pursuit of the flying fair one had hurried him into the presence of the King.

Alice Bridgenorth appeared too much transported with anger to permit her to pay attention to the rank or character of the company into which she had thus suddenly entered. "I remain no longer here, madam," she said to Mrs. Chiffinch, in a tone of uncontrollable resolution; "I leave instantly a house where I am exposed to company which I detest, and to solicitations which I despise."

The dismayed Mistress Chiffinch could only implore her, in broken whispers, to be silent; adding, while she pointed to Charles, who stood with his eyes fixed

rather on his audacious courtier than on the game which he pursued, "The King—the King!"

"If I am in the King's presence," said Alice, aloud, and in the same torrent of passionate feeling, while her eyes sparkled through tears of resentment and insulted modesty, "it is the better—it is his Majesty's duty to protect me; and on his protection I throw myself."

These words, which were spoken aloud, and boldly, at once recalled Julian to himself, who had hitherto stood, as it were, bewildered. He approached Alice, and, whispering in her ear that she had beside her one who would defend her with his life, implored her to trust to his guardianship in this emergency.

Clinging to his arm in all the ecstasy of gratitude and joy, the spirit which had so lately invigorated Alice in her own defence, gave way in a flood of tears, when she saw herself supported by him whom perhaps she most wished to recognize as her protector. She permitted Peveril gently to draw her back towards the screen before which she had been standing; where, holding by his arm, but at the same time endeavouring to conceal herself behind him, they waited the conclusion of a scene so singular.

The King seemed at first so much surprised at the unexpected apparition of the Duke of Buckingham, as to pay little or no attention to Alice, who had been the means of thus unceremoniously introducing his Grace into the presence at a most unsuitable moment. In that intriguing Court, it had not been the first time that the Duke had ventured to enter the lists of

gallantry in rivalry of his Sovereign, which made the present insult the more intolerable. His purpose of lying concealed in those private apartments was explained by the exclamations of Alice; and Charles, notwithstanding the placidity of his disposition, and his habitual guard over his passions, resented the attempt to seduce his destined mistress, as an Eastern Sultan would have done the insolence of a vizier, who anticipated his intended purchases of captive beauty in the slave market. The swarthy features of Charles reddened, and the strong lines on his dark visage seemed to become inflated, as he said, in a voice which faltered with passion, "Buckingham, you dared not have thus insulted your equal! To your master you may securely offer any affront, since his rank glues his sword to the scabbard."

The haughty Duke did not brook this taunt unanswered. "My sword," he said, with emphasis, "was never in the scabbard, when your Majesty's service required it should be unsheathed."

"Your Grace means, when its service was required for its master's interest," said the King; "for you could only gain the coronet of a Duke, by fighting for the royal crown. But it is over—I have treated you as a friend —a companion—almost an equal—you have repaid me with insolence and ingratitude."

"Sire," answered the Duke, firmly but respectfully, "I am unhappy in your displeasure; yet thus far fortunate, that while your words can confer honour, they cannot impair or take it away.—It is hard," he added,

lowering his voice, so as only to be heard by the King, —"It is hard that the squall of a peevish wench should cancel the services of so many years!"

"It is harder," said the King, in the same subdued tone, which both preserved through the rest of the conversation, "that a wench's bright eyes can make a nobleman forget the decencies due to his Sovereign's privacy."

"May I presume to ask your Majesty what decencies are those?" said the Duke.

Charles bit his lip to keep himself from smiling. "Buckingham," he said, "this is a foolish business; and we must not forget (as we have nearly done) that we have an audience to witness this scene, and should walk the stage with dignity. I will shew you your fault in private."

"It is enough that your Majesty has been displeased, and that I have unhappily been the occasion," said the Duke, kneeling; "although quite ignorant of any purpose beyond a few words of gallantry; and I sue thus low for your Majesty's pardon."

So saying, he kneeled gracefully down. "Thou hast it, George," said the placable Prince. "I believe thou wilt be sooner tired of offending, than I of forgiving."

"Long may your Majesty live to give the offence, with which it is your royal pleasure at present to charge my innocence," said the Duke.

"What mean you by that, my lord?" said Charles, the angry shade returning to his brow for a moment.

"My Liege," replied the Duke, "you are too hon-

ourable to deny your custom of shooting with Cupid's bird-bolts in other men's warrens. You have ta'en the royal right of free forestry over every man's park. It is hard that you should be so much displeased at hearing a chance arrow whizz near your own pales."

"No more on't," said the King; "but let us see where the dove has harboured."

"The Helen has found a Paris while we were quarrelling," replied the Duke.

"Rather an Orpheus," said the King; "and what is worse, one that is already provided with a Eurydice—She is clinging to the fiddler."

"It is mere fright," said Buckingham, "like Rochester's, when he crept into the bass-viol to hide himself from Sir Dermot O'Cleaver."

"We must make the people shew their talents," said the King, "and stop their mouths with money and civility, or we shall have this foolish encounter over half the town."

The King then approached Julian, and desired him to take his instrument, and cause his female companion to perform a saraband.

"I had already the honour to inform your Majesty," said Julian, "that I cannot contribute to your pleasure in the way you command me; and that this young person is——"

"A retainer of the Lady Powis," said the King, upon whose mind things not connected with his pleasures made a very slight impression. "Poor lady, she is in trouble about the Lords in the Tower."

"Pardon me sir," said Julian, "she is a dependent of the Countess of Derby."

"True, true," answered Charles; "it is indeed of Lady Derby, who hath also her own distresses in these times. Do you know who taught the young person to dance? Some of her steps mightily resemble Le Jeune's of Paris."

"I presume she was taught abroad, sir," said Julian; "for myself, I am charged with some weighty business by the Countess, which I would willingly communicate to your Majesty."

"We will send you to our Secretary of State," said the King. "But this dancing envoy will oblige us once more, will she not?—Empson, now that I remember, it was to your pipe that she danced—Strike up, man, and put mettle into her feet."

Empson began to play a well-known measure; and, as he had threatened, made more than one false note, until the King, whose ear was very accurate, rebuked him with, "Sirrah, art thou drunk at this early hour, or must thou too be playing thy slippery tricks with me? Thou thinkest thou art born to beat time, but I will have time beat into thee."

The hint was sufficient, and Empson took good care so to perform his air as to merit his high and deserved reputation. But on Fenella it made not the slightest impression. She rather leant than stood against the wall of the apartment; her countenance as pale as death, her arms and hands hanging down as if stiffened, and her existence only testified by the sobs which agi-

tated her bosom, and the tears which flowed from her half-closed eyes.

"A plague on it," said the King, "some evil spirit is abroad this morning; and the wenches are all bewitched, I think. Cheer up, my girl. What, in the devil's name, has changed thee at once from a Nymph to a Niobe? If thou standest there longer, thou wilt grow to the very marble wall—Or—oddsfish, George, have you been bird-bolting in this quarter also?"

Ere Buckingham could answer to this charge, Julian again kneeled down to the King, and prayed to be heard, were it only for five minutes. "The young woman," he said, "had been long in attendance on the Countess of Derby. She was bereaved of the faculties of speech and hearing."

"Oddsfish, man, and dances so well?" said the King. "Nay, all Gresham College shall never make me believe that."

"I would have thought it equally impossible, but for what I to-day witnessed," said Julian; "but only permit me, sir, to deliver the petition of my lady the Countess."

"And who art thou thyself, man?" said the Sovereign; "for though every thing which wears bodice and breast-knot has a right to speak to a King, and be answered, I know not that they have a title to audience through an envoy extraordinary."

"I am Julian Peveril of Derbyshire," answered the supplicant, "the son of Sir Geoffrey Peveril of Martindale Castle, who——"

"Body of me—the old Worcester man?" said the King. "Oddsfish, I remember him well—some harm has happened to him, I think—Is he not dead or very sick at least?"

"Ill at ease, and it please your Majesty, but not ill in health. He has been imprisoned on account of an alleged accession to this Plot."

"Look you there," said the King; "I knew he was in trouble; and yet how to help the stout old Knight, I can hardly tell. I can scarce escape suspicion of the Plot myself, though the principal object of it is to take away my own life. Were I to stir to save a plotter, I should certainly be brought in as an accessary.—Buckingham, thou hast some interest with those who built this fine state engine, or at least who have driven it on—be good-natured for once, though it is scarcely thy wont, and interfere to shelter our old Worcester friend, Sir Godfrey. You have not forgot him?"

"No, sir," answered the Duke; "for I never heard the name."

"It is Sir Geoffrey his Majesty would say," said Julian.

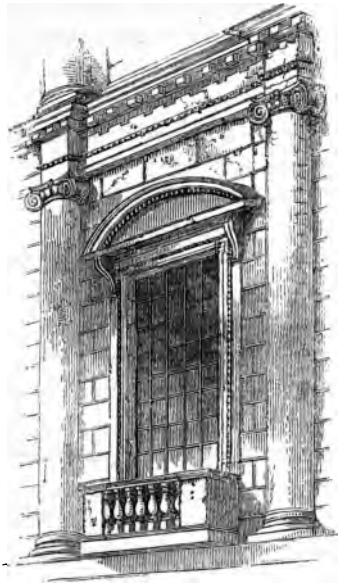
"And if his Majesty *did* say Sir Geoffrey, Master Peveril, I cannot see of what use I can be to your father," replied the Duke, coldly. "He is accused of a heavy crime; and a British subject so accused, can have no shelter either from prince or peer, but must stand to the award and deliverance of God and his country."

"Now, Heaven forgive thee thy hypocrisy, George,"

said the King, hastily. "I would rather hear the devil preach religion than thee teach patriotism. Thou knowest as well as I, that the nation is in a scarlet fever for fear of the poor Catholics, who are not two men to five hundred; and that the public mind is so harassed with new narrations of conspiracy, and fresh horrors every day, that people have as little real sense of what is just or unjust, as men who talk in their sleep of what is sense or nonsense. I have borne, and borne with it—I have seen blood flow on the scaffold, fearing to thwart the nation in its fury—and I pray to God that I or mine be not called on to answer for it. I will no longer swim with the torrent, which honour and conscience call upon me to stem—I will act the part of a Sovereign, and save my people from doing injustice, even in their own despite."

Charles walked hastily up and down the room as he expressed these unwonted sentiments, with energy equally unwonted. After a momentary pause, the Duke answered him gravely, "Spoken like a Royal King, sir; but—pardon me—not like a King of England."

Charles paused, as the Duke spoke, beside a window which looked full on Whitehall, and his eye was involuntarily attracted by the fatal window of the Banqueting House, out of which his unhappy father was conducted to execution. Charles was naturally, or, more properly, constitutionally, brave; but a life of pleasure, together with the habit of governing his course rather by what was expedient than by what was right,



rendered him unapt to dare the same scene of danger or of martyrdom, which had closed his father's life and reign; and the thought came over his half-formed resolution, like the rain upon a kindling beacon. In another man, his perplexity would have seemed almost ludicrous; but Charles could not lose, even under these circumstances, the dignity and grace which were as natural to him as his indifference and good humour. "Our Council must decide in this matter," he said, looking to the Duke; "and be assured, young man," he

added, addressing Julian, "your father shall not want an intercessor in his King, so far as the laws will permit my interference in his behalf."

Julian was about to retire, when Fenella, with a marked look, put into his hand a slip of paper, on which she had hastily written, "The packet—give him the packet."

After a moment's hesitation, during which he reflected that Fenella was the organ of the Countess's pleasure, Julian resolved to obey. "Permit me, then, Sire," he said, "to place in your royal hands this packet, intrusted to me by the Countess of Derby. The letters have already been once taken from me; and I have little hope that I can now deliver them as they are addressed. I place them, therefore, in your royal hands, certain that they will evince the innocence of the writer."

The King shook his head as he took the packet reluctantly. "It is no safe office you have undertaken, young man. A messenger has sometimes his throat cut for the sake of his despatches—But give them to me; and, Chiffinch, give me wax and a taper." He employed himself in folding the Countess's packet in another envelope. "Buckingham," he said, "you are evidence that I do not read them till the Council shall see them."

Buckingham approached, and offered his services in folding the parcel, but Charles rejected his assistance; and having finished his task, he sealed the packet with his own signet-ring. The Duke bit his lip and retired.

"And now, young man," said the King, "your errand is sped, so far as it can at present be forwarded."

Julian bowed deeply, as to take leave at these words, which he rightly interpreted as a signal for his departure. Alice Bridgenorth still clung to his arm, and motioned to withdraw along with him. The King and Buckingham looked at each other in conscious astonishment, and yet not without a desire to smile, so strange did it seem to them that a prize, for which, an instant before, they had been mutually contending, should thus glide out of their grasp, or rather be borne off by a third and very inferior competitor.

"Mistress Chiffinch," said the King, with a hesitation which he could not disguise, "I hope your fair charge is not about to leave you?"

"Certainly not, your Majesty," answered Chiffinch. "Alice, my love—you mistake—that opposite door leads to your apartments."

"Pardon me, madam," answered Alice; "I have indeed mistaken my road, but it was when I came hither."

"The errant damozel," said Buckingham, looking at Charles with as much intelligence as etiquette permitted him to throw into his eye, and then turning it towards Alice, as she still held by Julian's arm, "is resolved not to mistake her road a second time. She has chosen a sufficient guide."

"And yet stories tell that such guides have led maidens astray," said the King.

Alice blushed deeply, but instantly recovered her

composure so soon as she saw that her liberty was likely to depend upon the immediate exercise of resolution. She quitted, from a sense of insulted delicacy, the arm of Julian, to which she had hitherto clung; but as she spoke, she continued to retain a slight grasp of his cloak. "I have indeed mistaken my way," she repeated, still addressing Mistress Chiffinch, "but it was when I crossed this threshold. The usage to which I have been exposed in your house, has determined me to quit it instantly."

"I will not permit that, my young mistress," answered Mistress Chiffinch, "until your uncle, who placed you under my care, shall relieve me of the charge of you."

"I will answer for my conduct, both to my uncle, and, what is of more importance, to my father," said Alice. "You must permit me to depart, madam; I am free-born, and you have no right to detain me."

"Pardon me, my young madam," said Mistress Chiffinch, "I have a right, and I will maintain it too."

"I will know that before quitting this presence," said Alice, firmly; and, advancing a step or two, she dropped on her knee before the King. "Your Majesty," said she, "if indeed I kneel before King Charles, is the father of your subjects."

"Of a good many of them," said the Duke of Buckingham, apart.

"I demand protection of you, in the name of God, and of the oath your Majesty swore when you placed on your head the crown of this kingdom!"

"You have my protection," said the King, a little confused by an appeal so unexpected and so solemn. "Do but remain quiet with this lady, with whom your parents have placed you; neither Buckingham nor any one else shall intrude on you."

"His Majesty," added Buckingham, in the same tone, and speaking from the restless and mischief-making spirit of contradiction, which he never could restrain, even when indulging it was most contrary, not only to propriety, but to his own interest,—"His Majesty will protect you, fair lady, from all intrusion, save what must not be termed such."

Alice darted a keen look on the Duke, as if to read his meaning; another on Charles, to know whether she had guessed it rightly. There was a guilty confession on the King's brow, which confirmed Alice's determination to depart. "Your Majesty will forgive me," she said; "it is not here that I can enjoy the advantage of your royal protection. I am resolved to leave this house. If I am detained, it must be by violence, which I trust no one dare offer to me in your Majesty's presence. This gentleman, whom I have long known, will conduct me to my friends."

"We make but an indifferent figure in this scene, methinks," said the King, addressing the Duke of Buckingham, and speaking in a whisper; "but she must go—I neither will, nor dare, stop her from returning to her father."

"And if she does," swore the Duke internally, "I would, as Sir Andrew saith, I might never touch fair

lady's hand." And stepping back, he spoke a few words with Empson the musician, who left the apartment for a few minutes, and presently returned.

The King seemed irresolute concerning the part he should act under circumstances so peculiar. To be foiled in a gallant intrigue, was to subject himself to the ridicule of his gay Court; to persist in it by any means which approached to constraint, would have been tyrannical; and, what perhaps he might judge as severe an imputation, it would have been unbecoming a gentleman. "Upon my honour, young lady," he said, with an emphasis, "you have nothing to fear in this house. But it is improper, for your own sake, that you should leave it in this abrupt manner. If you will have the goodness to wait but a quarter of an hour. Mistress Chiffinch's coach will be placed at your command, to transport you where you will. Spare yourself the ridicule, and me the pain, of seeing you leave the house of one of my servants, as if you were escaping from a prison."

The King spoke in good-natured sincerity, and Alice was inclined for an instant to listen to his advice; but recollecting that she had to search for her father and uncle, or, failing them, for some suitable place of secure residence, it rushed on her mind that the attendants of Mistress Chiffinch were not likely to prove trusty guides or assistants in such a purpose. Firmly and respectfully she announced her purpose of instant departure. She needed no other escort, she said, than what this gentleman, Master Julian Peveril, who was

well known to her father, would willingly afford her; nor did she need that farther, than until she had reached her father's residence.

"Farewell, then, lady, a God's name!" said the King; "I am sorry so much beauty should be wedded to so many shrewish suspicions.—For you, Master Peveril, I should have thought you had enough to do with your own affairs, without interfering with the humours of the fair sex. The duty of conducting all strayed damsels into the right path, is, as matters go in this good city, rather too weighty an undertaking for your youth and inexperience."

Julian, eager to conduct Alice from a place of which he began fully to appreciate the perils, answered nothing to this taunt, but, bowing reverently, led her from the apartment. Her sudden appearance, and the animated scene which followed, had entirely absorbed, for the moment, the recollection of his father, and of the Countess of Derby; and while the dumb attendant, of the latter remained in the room, a silent, and, as it were, stunned spectator of all that had happened, Peveril had become, in the predominating interest of Alice's critical situation, totally forgetful of her presence. But no sooner had he left the room, without noticing or attending to her, than Fenella, starting as from a trance, drew herself up, and looked wildly around, like one waking from a dream, as if to assure herself that her companion was gone, and gone without paying the slightest attention to her. She folded her hands together, and cast her eyes upwards, with an expression

of such agony as explained to Charles (as he thought) what painful ideas were passing in her mind. "This Peveril is a perfect pattern of successful perfidy," said the King; "he has not only succeeded at first sight in carrying off this Queen of the Amazons, but he has left us, I think, a disconsolate Ariadne in her place.—But weep not, my princess of pretty movements," he said, addressing himself to Fenella; "if we cannot call in Bacchus to console you, we will commit you to the care of Empson, who shall drink with *Liber Pater* for a thousand pounds, and I will say done first."

As the King spoke these words, Fenella rushed past him with her wonted rapidity of step, and, with much less courtesy than was due to the royal presence, hurried down stairs, and out of the house, without attempting to open any communication with the Monarch. He saw her abrupt departure with more surprise than displeasure; and presently afterwards, bursting into a fit of laughter, he said to the Duke, "Oddsfish, George, this young spark might teach the best of us how to manage the wenches. I have had my own experience, but I could never yet contrive either to win or lose them with so little ceremony."

"Experience, sir," replied the Duke, "cannot be acquired without years."

"True, George; and you would, I suppose, insinuate," said Charles, "that the gallant who acquires it, loses as much in youth as he gains in art? I defy your insinuation, George. You cannot overreach your master, old as you think him, either in love or politics. You have

not the secret *plumer la poule sans la faire crier*, witness this morning's work. I will give you odds at all games —ay, and at the Mall, too, if thou darest accept my challenge.—Chiffinch, what for dost thou convulse thy pretty throat and face with sobbing and hatching tears, which seem rather unwilling to make their appearance?"

"It is for fear," whined Chiffinch, "that your Majesty should think—that you should expect——"

"That I should expect gratitude from a courtier, or faith from a woman?" answered the King, patting her at the same time under the chin, to make her raise her face—"Tush! chicken, I am not so superfluous."

"There it is now," said Chiffinch, continuing to sob the more bitterly, as she felt herself unable to produce any tears; "I see your Majesty is determined to lay all the blame on me, when I am innocent as an unborn babe—I will be judged by his Grace."

"No doubt, no doubt, Chiffie," said the King. "His Grace and you will be excellent judges in each other's cause, and as good witnesses in each other's favour. But to investigate the matter impartially, we must examine our evidence apart.—My Lord Duke, we meet at the Mall at noon, if your Grace dare accept my challenge."

His Grace of Buckingham bowed, and retired.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SECOND.

> But when the bully with assuming pace,
> Cocks his broad hat, edged round with tarnished lace,
> Yield not the way—defy his strutting pride,
> And thrust him to the muddy kennel's side.
> Yet rather bear the shower and toils of mud,
> Than in the doubtful quarrel risk thy blood.
>
> GAY'S TRIVIA.

JULIAN PEVERIL, half-leading, half-supporting Alice Bridgenorth, had reached the middle of St. James's Street ere the doubt occurred to him which way they should bend their course. He then asked Alice whither he should conduct her, and learned to his surprise and embarrassment, that, far from knowing where her father was to be found, she had no certain knowledge that he was in London, and only hoped that he had arrived, from the expressions which he had used at parting. She mentioned her uncle Christian's address, but it was with doubt and hesitation, arising from the hands in which he had already placed her; and her reluctance to go again under his protection was strongly confirmed by her youthful guide, when a few words had established to his conviction the identity of Ganlesse and Christian.—What then was to be done?

"Alice," said Julian, after a moment's reflection, "you must seek your earliest and best friend—I mean my mother. She has now no castle in which to receive you—she has but a miserable lodging, so near the jail in which my father is confined, that it seems almost a cell of the same prison. I have not seen her since my coming hither; but thus much have I learned by inquiry. We will now go to her apartment; such as it is, I know she will share it with one so innocent and so unprotected as you are."

"Gracious Heaven!" said the poor girl, "am I then so totally deserted, that I must throw myself on the mercy of her who, of all the world, has most reason to spurn me from her?—Julian, can you advise me to this?—Is there none else who will afford me a few hours' refuge, till I can hear from my father?—No other protectress but her whose ruin has, I fear, been accelerated by——Julian, I dare not appear before your mother! she must hate me for my family, and despise me for my meanness. To be a second time cast on her protection, when the first has been so evil repaid—Julian, I dare not go with you."

"She has never ceased to love you, Alice," said her conductor, whose steps she continued to attend, even while declaring her resolution not to go with him, "she never felt anything but kindness towards you, nay, towards your father; for though his dealings with us have been harsh, she can allow much for the provocation which he has received. Believe me, with her you will be safe as with a mother—perhaps may be

the means of reconciling the divisions by which we have suffered so much."

"Might God grant it!" said Alice. "Yet how shall I face your mother? And will she be able to protect me against these powerful men—against my uncle Christian? Alas, that I must call him my worst enemy!"

"She has the ascendancy which honour hath over infamy, and virtue over vice," said Julian; "and to no human power but your father's will she resign you, if you consent to choose her for your protectress. Come, then, with me, Alice; and——

Julian was interrupted by some one, who, laying an unceremonious hold of his cloak, pulled it with so much force as compelled him to stop and lay his hand on his sword. He turned at the same time, and, when he turned, beheld Fenella. The cheek of the mute glowed like fire; her eyes sparkled, and her lips were forcibly drawn together, as if she had difficulty to repress those wild screams which usually attended her agonies of passion, and which, uttered in the open street, must instantly have collected a crowd. As it was, her appearance was so singular, and her emotion so evident, that men gazed as they came on, and looked back after they had passed, at the singular vivacity of her gestures; while, holding Peveril's cloak with one hand, she made, with the other, the most eager and imperious signs that he should leave Alice Bridgenorth and follow her. She touched the plume in her bonnet, to remind him of the Earl—pointed to her heart to intimate the Countess

—raised her closed hand, as if to command him in their name—and next moment folded both, as if to supplicate him in her own; while, pointing to Alice with an expression at once of angry and scornful derision, she waved her hand repeatedly and disdainfully, to intimate that Peveril ought to cast her off, as something undeserving his protection.

Frightened, she knew not why, at these wild gestures, Alice clung closer to Julian's arm than she had at first dared to do; and this mark of confidence in his protection seemed to increase the passion of Fenella.

Julian was dreadfully embarrassed; his situation was sufficiently precarious, even before Fenella's ungovernable passions threatened to ruin the only plan which he had been able to suggest. What she wanted with him—how far the fate of the Earl and Countess might depend on his following her, he could not even conjecture; but be the call how peremptory soever, he resolved not to comply with it until he had seen Alice placed in safety. In the meantime, he determined not to lose sight of Fenella; and disregarding her repeated, disdainful, and impetuous rejection of the hand which he offered her, he at length seemed so far to have soothed her, that she seized upon his right arm, and, as if despairing of his following *her* path, appeared reconciled to attend him on that which he himself should choose.

Thus, with a youthful female clinging to each arm, and both remarkably calculated to attract the public eye, though from very different reasons, Julian resolved

to make the shortest road to the water-side, and there to take boat for Blackfriars, as the nearest point of landing to Newgate, where he concluded that Lance had already announced his arrival in London to Sir Geoffrey, then inhabiting that dismal region, and to his lady, who, so far as the jailor's rigour permitted, shared and softened his imprisonment.

Julian's embarrassment in passing Charing-Cross and Northumberland-House was so great as to excite the attention of the passengers; for he had to compose his steps so as to moderate the unequal and rapid pace of Fenella to the timid and faint progress of his left-hand companion; and while it would have been needless to address himself to the former, who could not comprehend him, he dared not speak himself to Alice, for fear of awakening into frenzy the jealousy, or at least the impatience of Fenella.

Many passengers looked at them with wonder, and some with smiles; but Julian remarked that there were two who never lost sight of them, and to whom his situation, and the demeanour of his companions, seemed to afford matter of undisguised merriment. These were young men, such as may be seen in the same precincts in the present day, allowing for the difference in the fashion of their apparel. They abounded in periwig, and fluttered with many hundred yards of ribbon, disposed in bow-knots upon their sleeves, their breeches, and their waistcoats, in the very extremity of the existing mode. A quantity of lace and embroidery made their habits rather fine than tasteful. In a word,

they were dressed in that caricature of the fashion, which sometimes denotes a harebrained man of quality who has a mind to be distinguished as a fop of the first order, but is much more frequently the disguise of those who desire to be esteemed men of rank on account of their dress, having no other pretension to the distinction.

These two gallants passed Peveril more than once, linked arm in arm, then sauntered, so as to oblige him to pass them in turn, laughing and whispering during these manœuvres—staring broadly at Peveril and his female companions—and affording them, as they came into contact, none of those facilities of giving place which are required on such occasions by the ordinary rules of the pavé.

Peveril did not immediately observe their impertinence; but when it was too gross to escape his notice, his gall began to arise; and in addition to all the other embarrassments of his situation, he had to combat the longing desire which he felt to cudgel handsomely the two coxcombs who seemed thus determined on insulting him. Patience and sufferance were indeed strongly imposed on him by circumstances; but at length it became scarcely possible to observe their dictates any longer.

When, for the third time, Julian found himself obliged, with his companions, to pass this troublesome brace of fops, they kept walking close behind him, speaking so loud as to be heard, and in a tone of perfect indifference whether he listened to them or not.

"This is bumpkin's best luck," said the taller of the two (who was indeed a man of remarkable size), alluding to the plainness of Peveril's dress, which was scarce fit for the streets of London—"Two such fine wenches, and under guard of a grey frock and an oaken riding-rod!"

"Nay, Puritan's luck rather, and more than enough of it," said his companion. "You may read Puritan in his pace and in his patience."

"Right as a pint bumper, Tom," said his friend —"Issachar is an ass that stoopeth between two burdens."

"I have a mind to ease long-eared Laurence of one of his encumbrances," said the shorter fellow. "That black-eyed sparkler looks as if she had a mind to run away from him."

"Ay," answered the taller, "and the blue-eyed trembler looks as if she would fall behind into my loving arms."

At these words, Alice, holding still closer by Peveril's arm than formerly, mended her pace almost to running, in order to escape from men whose language was so alarming; and Fenella walked hastily forward in the same manner, having perhaps caught, from the men's gestures and demeanour, that apprehension which Alice had taken from their language.

Fearful of the consequences of a fray in the streets, which must necessarily separate him from these unprotected females, Peveril endeavoured to compound betwixt the prudence necessary for their protection and his

own rising resentment; and as this troublesome pair of attendants endeavoured again to pass them close to Hungerford Stairs, he said to them, with constrained calmness, "Gentlemen, I owe you something for the attention you have bestowed on the affairs of a stranger. If you have any pretension to the name I have given you, you will tell me where you are to be found."

"And with what purpose," said the taller of the two, sneeringly, "does your most rustic gravity, or your most grave rusticity, require of us such information?"

So saying, they both faced about, in such a manner as to make it impossible for Julian to advance any farther.

"Make for the stairs, Alice," he said; "I will be with you in an instant." Then freeing himself with difficulty from the grasp of his companions, he cast his cloak hastily round his left arm, and said, sternly, to his opponents, "Will you give me your names, sirs; or will you be pleased to make way?"

"Not till we know for whom we are to give place," said one of them.

"For one who will else teach you what you want—good manners," said Peveril, and advanced, as if to push between them.

They separated, but one of them stretched forth his foot before Peveril, as if he meant to trip him. The blood of his ancestors was already boiling within him; he struck the man on the face with the oaken rod which he had just sneered at, and, throwing it from

him, instantly unsheathed his sword. Both the others drew, and pushed at once; but he caught the point of the one rapier in his cloak, and parried the other thrust with his own weapon. He might have been less lucky in the second close, but a cry arose among the watermen, of "Shame, shame! two upon one!"

"They are men of the Duke of Buckingham's," said one fellow—"there's no safe meddling with them."

"They may be the devil's men, if they will," said an ancient Triton, flourishing his stretcher; "but I say fair play, and old England for ever; and, I say, knock the gold-laced puppies down, unless they will fight turn-about with grey jerkin, like honest fellows. One down—t'other come on."

The lower orders of London have in all times been remarkable for the delight which they have taken in club-law, or fist-law; and for the equity and impartiality with which they see it administered. The noble science of defence was then so generally known, that a bout at single rapier excited at that time as much interest and as little wonder as a boxing-match in our own days. The bystanders, experienced in such affrays, presently formed a ring, within which Peveril and the taller and more forward of his antagonists were soon engaged in close combat with their swords, whilst the other, overawed by the spectators, was prevented from interfering.

"Well done the tall fellow!"—"Well thrust, long-legs!"—"Huzza for two ells and a quarter!" were the sounds with which the fray was at first cheered; for Peveril's opponent not only shewed great activity and

skill in fence, but had also a decided advantage, from the anxiety with which Julian looked out for Alice Bridgenorth; the care for whose safety diverted him in the beginning of the onset from that which he ought to have exclusively bestowed on the defence of his own life. A slight flesh-wound in the side at once punished, and warned him of, his inadvertence; when, turning his whole thoughts on the business in which he was engaged, and animated with anger against his impertinent intruder, the rencontre speedily began to assume another face, amidst cries of "Well done, grey jerkin!"—"Try the metal of his gold doublet!"—"Finely thrust!"—"Curiously parried!"—"There went another eyelet-hole to his broidered jerkin!"—"Fairly pinked, by G—d!" In fact, the last exclamation was uttered amid a general roar of applause, accompanying a successful and conclusive lounge, by which Peveril ran his gigantic antagonist through the body. He looked at his prostrate foe for a moment; then, recovering himself, called loudly to know what had become of the lady.

"Never mind the lady, if you be wise," said one of the waterman; "the constable will be here in an instant. I'll give your honour a cast across the water in a moment. It may be as much as your neck's worth. Shall only charge a Jacobus."

"You be d—d!" said one of his rivals in profession, "as your father was before you; for a Jacobus, I'll set the gentleman into Alsatia, where neither bailiff nor constable dare trespass."

"The lady, you scoundrels, the lady!" exclaimed Peveril—"Where is the lady?"

"I'll carry your honour where you shall have enough of ladies, if that be your want," said the old Triton; and as he spoke, the clamour amongst the watermen was renewed, each hoping to cut his own profit out of the emergency of Julian's situation.

"A sculler will be least suspected, your honour," said one fellow.

"A pair of oars will carry you through the water like a wild-duck," said another.

"But you have got never a tilt, brother," said a third. "Now I can put the gentleman as snug as if he were under hatches."

In the midst of the oaths and clamour attending this aquatic controversy for his custom, Peveril at length made them understand that he would bestow a Jacobus, not on him whose boat was first oars, but on whomsoever should inform him of the fate of the lady.

"Of which lady?" said a sharp fellow; "for, to my thought, there was a pair on them."

"Of both, of both," answered Peveril; "but first, of the fair-haired lady?"

"Ay, ay, that was she that shrieked so when gold-jacket's companion handed her into No. 20."

"Who—what—who dared to hand her?" exclaimed Peveril.

"Nay, master, you have heard enough of my tale without a fee," said the waterman.

"Sordid rascal!" said Peveril, giving him a gold

piece, "speak out or I'll run my sword through you!"

"For the matter of that, master," answered the fellow, "not while I can handle this trunnion—but a bargain's a bargain; and so I'll tell you, for your gold piece, that the comrade of the fellow forced one of your wenches, her with the fair hair, will she nill she, into Tickling Tom's wherry; and they are far enough up Thames by this time, with wind and tide."

"Sacred Heaven, and I stand here!" exclaimed Julian.

"Why, that is because your honour will not take a boat."

"You are right, my friend—a boat—a boat instantly!"

"Follow me, then, squire.—Here, Tom, bear a hand—the gentleman is our fare."

A volley of water language was exchanged betwixt the successful candidate for Peveril's custom and his disappointed brethren, which concluded by the ancient Triton's bellowing out, in a tone above them all, "that the gentleman was in a fair way to make a voyage to the isle of gulls, for that sly Jack was only bantering him—No. 20 had rowed for York-Buildings."

"To the isle of gallows," cried another; "for here comes one who will mar his trip up Thames, and carry him down to Execution-Dock."

In fact, as he spoke the word, a constable with three or four of his assistants, armed with the old-fashioned brown-bills, which were still used for arming those

guardians of the peace, cut off our hero's farther progress to the water's edge, by arresting him in the King's name. To attempt resistance would have been madness, as he was surrounded on all sides; so Peveril was disarmed, and carried before the nearest Justice of the Peace, for examination and committal.

The legal sage before whom Julian was taken, was a man very honest in his intentions, very bounded in his talents, and rather timid in his disposition. Before the general alarm given to England, and to the city of London in particular, by the notable discovery of the Popish Plot, Master Maulstatute had taken serene and undisturbed pride and pleasure in the discharge of his duties as a Justice of the Peace, with the exercise of all its honorary privileges and awful authority. But the murder of Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey had made a strong, nay, an indelible impression on his mind; and he walked the Courts of Themis with fear and trembling after that memorable and melancholy event.

Having a high idea of his official importance, and rather an exalted notion of his personal consequence, his honour saw nothing from that time but cords and daggers before his eyes, and never stepped out of his own house, which he fortified, and in some measure garrisoned, with half a dozen tall watchmen and constables, without seeing himself watched by a Papist in disguise, with a drawn sword under his cloak. It was even whispered that, in the agonies of his fears, the worshipful Master Maulstatute mistook the kitchen-wench with a tinder-box, for a Jesuit with a pistol;

but if any one dared to laugh at such an error, he would have done well to conceal his mirth, lest he fell under the heavy inculpation of being a banterer and stifler of the Plot—a crime almost as deep as that of being himself a plotter. In fact the fears of the honest Justice, however ridiculously exorbitant, were kept so much in countenance by the outcry of the day, and the general nervous fever which afflicted every good Protestant, that Master Maulstatute was accounted the bolder man and the better magistrate, while, under the terror of the air-drawn dagger which fancy placed continually before his eyes, he continued to dole forth justice in the recesses of his private chamber, nay, occasionally to attend Quarter-sessions, when the hall was guarded by a sufficient body of the militia. Such was the wight, at whose door, well chained and doubly bolted, the constable who had Julian in custody now gave his important and well-known knock.

Notwithstanding this official signal, the party was not admitted, until the clerk, who acted the part of high-warder, had reconnoitred them through a grated wicket; for who could say whether the Papists might not have made themselves master of Master Constable's sign, and have prepared a pseudo watch to burst in and murder the Justice, under pretence of bringing a criminal before him?—Less hopeful projects had figured in the Narrative of the Popish Plot.

All being found right, the key was turned, the bolts were drawn, and the chain unhooked, so as to permit entrance to the constable, the prisoner, and the assist-

ants; and the door was then as suddenly shut against the witnesses, who, as less trustworthy persons, were requested (through the wicket) to remain in the yard, until they should be called in their respective turns.

Had Julian been inclined for mirth, as was far from being the case, he must have smiled at the incongruity of the clerk's apparel, who had belted over his black buckram suit a buff baldric, sustaining a broadsword, and a pair of huge horse-pistols; and, instead of the low flat hat, which, coming in place of the city cap, completed the dress of a scrivener, had placed on his greasy locks a rusted steel cap, which had seen Marston-moor; across which projected his well-used quill, in the guise of a plume—the shape of the morion not admitting of its being stuck, as usual, behind his ear.

This whimsical figure conducted the constable, his assistants, and the prisoner, into the low hall, where his principal dealt forth justice; who presented an appearance still more singular than that of his dependant.

Sundry good Protestants, who thought so highly of themselves as to suppose they were worthy to be distinguished as objects of Catholic cruelty, had taken to defensive arms on the occasion. But it was quickly found that a breast-plate and back-plate of proof, fastened together with iron clasps, was no convenient enclosure for a man who meant to eat venison and custard; and that a buff-coat or shirt of mail, was scarcely more accommodating to the exertions necessary on such active occasions. Besides, there were other objections, as the alarming and menacing aspects which

such warlike habiliments gave to the Exchange, and other places, where merchants most do congregate; and excoriations were bitterly complained of by many, who, not belonging to the artillery company, or trained bands, had no experience in bearing defensive armour.

To obviate these objections, and, at the same time, to secure the persons of all true Protestant citizens against open force or privy assassinations on the part of the Papists, some ingenious artist, belonging, we may presume, to the worshipful Mercers' Company, had contrived a species of armour, of which neither the horse-armoury in the Tower, nor Gwynnap's Gothic Hall, no, nor Dr. Meyrick's invaluable collection of ancient arms, has preserved any specimen. It was called silk-armour,* being composed of a doublet and breeches of quilted silk, so closely stitched, and of such thickness, as to be proof against either bullet or steel; while a thick bonnet of the same materials, with ear-flaps attached to it, and, on the whole, much resembling a nightcap, completed the equipment, and ascertained the security of the wearer from the head to the knee.

Master Maulstatute, among other worthy citizens, had adopted this singular panoply, which had the advantage of being soft, and warm, and flexible, as well as safe. And he now sat in his judicial elbow-chair—a short, rotund figure, hung round, as it were, with cushions, for such was the appearance of the quilted garments; and with a nose protruded from under the silken casque, the size of which, together with the

Note A. Silk Armour.

unwieldiness of the whole figure, gave his worship no indifferent resemblance to the sign of the Hog in Armour, which was considerably improved by the defensive garment being of a dusky orange-colour, not altogether unlike the hue of those half-wild swine which are to be found in the forests of Hampshire.

Secure in these invulnerable envelopements, his worship had rested content, although severed from his own death-doing weapons, of rapier, poniard, and pistols, which were placed, nevertheless, at no great distance from his chair. One offensive implement, indeed, he thought it prudent to keep on the table beside his huge Coke upon Lyttleton. This was a sort of pocket flail, consisting of a piece of strong ash, about eighteen inches long, to which was attached a swinging club of *lignum vitæ*, nearly twice as long as the handle, but jointed so as to be easily folded up. This instrument, which bore at that time the singular name of the Protestant flail, might be concealed under the coat, until circumstances demanded its public appearance. A better precaution against surprise than his arms, whether offensive or defensive, was a strong iron grating, which, crossing the room in front of the Justice's table, and communicating by a grated door, which was usually kept locked, effectually separated the accused party from his judge.

Justice Maulstatute, such as we have described him, chose to hear the accusation of the witnesses before calling on Peveril for his defence. The detail of the affray was briefly given by the bystanders, and seemed

deeply to touch the spirit of the examinator. He shook his silken casque emphatically, when he understood, that, after some language betwixt the parties, which the witnesses did not quite understand, the young man in custody struck the first blow, and drew his sword before the wounded party had unsheathed his weapon. Again he shook his crested head yet more solemnly when the result of the conflict was known; and yet again when one of the witnesses declared, that, to the best of his knowledge, the sufferer in the fray was a gentleman belonging to the household of his Grace the Duke of Buckingham.

"A worthy peer," quoth the armed magistrate—"a true Protestant, and a friend to his country. Mercy on us, to what a height of audacity hath this age arisen! We see well, and could, were we as blind as a mole, out of what quiver this shaft hath been drawn."

He then put on his spectacles, and having desired Julian to be brought forward, he glared upon him awfully with those glazen eyes, from under the shade of his quilted turban.

"So young," he said, "and so hardened—lack-a-day!—and a Papist, I'll warrant."

Peveril had time enough to recollect the necessity of his being at large, if he could possibly obtain his freedom, and interposed here a civil contradiction of his worship's gracious supposition. "He was no Catholic," he said, "but an unworthy member of the Church of England."

"Perhaps but a lukewarm Protestant, notwithstand-

ing," said the sage Justice; "there are those amongst us who ride tantivy to Rome, and have already made out half the journey—ahem!"

Peveril disowned his being any such.

"And who art thou, then?" said the Justice; "for, friend, to tell you plainly, I like not your visage—ahem!"

These short and emphatic coughs were accompanied each by a succinct nod, intimating the perfect conviction of the speaker that he had made the best, the wisest, and the most acute observation, of which the premises admitted.

Julian, irritated by the whole circumstances of his detention, answered the Justice's interrogation in rather a lofty tone. "My name is Julian Peveril!"

"Now, Heaven be around us!" said the terrified Justice—"the son of that black-hearted Papist and traitor, Sir Geoffrey Peveril, now in hands, and on the verge of trial!"

"How, sir!" exclaimed Julian, forgetting his situation, and, stepping forward to the grating, with a violence which made the bars clatter, he so startled the appalled Justice, that, snatching his Protestant flail, Master Maulstatute aimed a blow at his prisoner, to repel what he apprehended was a premeditated attack. But whether it was owing to the Justice's hurry of mind, or inexperience in managing the weapon, he not only missed his aim, but brought the swinging part of the machine round his own skull, with such a severe counter-buff, as completely to try the efficacy of his

cushioned helmet, and, in spite of its defence, to convey a stunning sensation, which he rather hastily imputed to the consequence of a blow received from Peveril.

His assistants did not directly confirm the opinion which the Justice had so unwarrantably adopted; but all with one voice agreed, that, but for their own active and instantaneous interference, there was no knowing what mischief might have been done by a person so dangerous as the prisoner. The general opinion that he meant to proceed in the matter of his own rescue, *par voie du fait*, was indeed so deeply impressed on all present, that Julian saw it would be in vain to offer any defence, especially being but too conscious that the alarming, and probably the fatal consequences of his rencontre with the bully, rendered his commitment inevitable. He contented himself with asking into what prison he was to be thrown; and when the formidable word Newgate was returned as full answer, he had at least the satisfaction to reflect, that, stern and dangerous as was the shelter of that roof, he should at least enjoy it in company with his father; and that, by some means or other, they might perhaps obtain the satisfaction of a melancholy meeting, under the circumstances of mutual calamity, which seemed impending over their house.

Assuming the virtue of more patience than he actually possessed, Julian gave the magistrate (to whom all the mildness of his demeanour could not, however, reconcile him) the direction to the house where he

lodged, together with a request that his servant, Lance Outram, might be permitted to send him his money and wearing apparel; adding, that all which might be in his possession, either of arms or writings—the former amounting to a pair of travelling pistols, and the last to a few memoranda of little consequence, he willingly consented to place at the disposal of the magistrate. It was in that moment that he entertained, with sincere satisfaction, the comforting reflection, that the important papers of Lady Derby were already in the possession of the Sovereign.

The Justice promised attention to his requests; but reminded him, with great dignity, that his present complacent and submissive behaviour ought, for his own sake, to have been adopted from the beginning, instead of disturbing the presence of magistracy with such atrocious marks of the malignant, rebellious, and murderous spirit of Popery, as he had at first exhibited. "Yet," he said, "as he was a goodly young man, and of honourable quality, he would not suffer him to be dragged through the streets as a felon, but had ordered a coach for his accommodation."

His honour, Master Maulstatute, uttered the word "coach" with the importance of one who, as Dr. Johnson saith of later date, is conscious of the dignity of putting horses to his chariot. The worshipful Master Maulstatute, did not, however, on this occasion, do Julian the honour of yoking to his huge family caroche the two "frampal jades" (to use the term of the period) which were wont to drag that ark to the meeting-house

of pure and precious Master Howlaglass on a Thursday's evening for lecture, and on a Sunday for a four-hours' sermon. He had recourse to a leathern convenience, then more rare, but just introduced, with every prospect of the great facility which has since been afforded by hackney coaches, to all manner of communication, honest and dishonest, legal and illegal. Our friend Julian, hitherto much more accustomed to the saddle than to any other conveyance, soon found himself in a hackney carriage, with the constable and two assistants for his companions, armed up to the teeth—the port of destination being, as they had already intimated, the ancient fortress of Newgate.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-THIRD.

'Tis the black ban-dog of our jail—Pray look on him,
But at a wary distance—rouse him not—
He bays not till he worries.

THE BLACK DOG OF NEWGATE.

THE coach stopped before those tremendous gates, which resemble those of Tartarus, save only that they rather more frequently permit safe and honourable egress; although at the price of the same anxiety and labour with which Hercules and one or two of the demi-gods, extricated themselves from the Hell of the ancient mythology, and sometimes, it is said, by the assistance of the golden boughs.

Julian stepped out of the vehicle, carefully supported on either side by his companions, and also by one or two turnkeys, whom the first summons of the deep bell at the gate had called to their assistance. That attention, it may be guessed, was not bestowed lest he should make a false step, so much as for fear of his attempting an escape, of which he had no intentions. A few 'prentices and straggling boys of the neighbouring market, which derived considerable advantage from increase of custom, in consequence of the numerous committals on account of the Popish Plot, and who therefore were zealous Protestants, saluted him on his descent with jubilee shouts of "Whoop, Papist! whoop, Papist! D——n to the Pope, and all his adherents!"

Under such auspices, Peveril was ushered in beneath that gloomy gateway, where so many bid adieu on their entrance at once to honour and to life. The dark and dismal arch under which he soon found himself, opened upon a large court-yard, where a number of debtors were employed in playing at hand-ball, pitch-and-toss, hustle-cap, and other games; for which relaxations the rigour of their creditors afforded them full leisure, while it debarred them the means of pursuing the honest labour by which they might have redeemed their affairs, and maintained their starving and beggared families.

But with this careless and desperate group Julian was not to be numbered, being led, or rather forced, by his conductors, into a low-arched door, which, carefully secured by bolts and bars, opened for his reception on

one side of the archway, and closed, with all its fastenings, the moment after his hasty entrance. He was then conducted along two or three gloomy passages, which, where they intersected each other, were guarded by as many strong wickets, one of iron gates, and the others of stout oak, clenched with plates, and studded with nails of the same metal. He was not allowed to pause until he found himself hurried into a little round vaulted room, which several of these passages opened into, and which seemed, with respect to the labyrinth through part of which he had passed, to resemble the central point of a spider's web, in which the main lines of that reptile's curious maze are always found to terminate.

The resemblance did not end here; for in this small vaulted apartment, the walls of which were hung round with musketoons, pistols, cutlasses, and other weapons, as well as with many sets of fetters and irons of different construction, all disposed in great order, and ready for employment, a person sat, who might not unaptly be compared to a huge bloated and bottled spider, placed there to secure the prey which had fallen into his toils.

This official had originally been a very strong and square-built man, of large size, but was now so overgrown, from over feeding, perhaps, and want of exercise, as to bear the same resemblance to his former self which a stall-fed ox still retains to a wild bull. The look of no man is so inauspicious as a fat man, upon whose features ill-nature has marked an habitual stamp.

He seems to have reversed the old proverb of "laugh and be fat," and to have thriven under the influence of the worst affections of the mind. Passionate we can allow a jolly mortal to be; but it seems unnatural to his goodly case to be sulky and brutal. Now this man's features, surly and tallow-coloured; his limbs, swelled and disproportioned; his huge paunch and unwieldly carcass, suggested the idea, that, having once found his way into this central recess, he had there fattened, like the weasel in the fable, and fed largely and foully, until he had become incapable of retreating through any of the narrow paths that terminated at his cell; and was thus compelled to remain, like a toad under the cold stone, fattening amid the squalid airs of the dungeons by which he was surrounded, which would have proved pestiferous to any other than such a congenial inhabitant. Huge iron-clasped books lay before this ominous specimen of pinguitude—the records of the realm of misery, in which office he officiated as prime minister; and had Peveril come thither as an unconcerned visiter, his heart would have sunk within him at considering the mass of human wretchedness which must needs be registered in these fatal volumes. But his own distresses sat too heavy on his mind to permit any general reflections of this nature.

The constable and this bulky official whispered together, after the former had delivered to the latter the warrant of Julian's commitment. The word *whispered* is not quite accurate, for their communication was

carried on less by words than by looks and expressive signs; by which, in all such situations, men learn to supply the use of language, and to add mystery to what is in itself sufficiently terrible to the captive. The only words which could be heard were those of the Warden, or, as he was called then, the Captain of the Jail, "Another bird to the cage?——"

"Who will whistle 'Pretty Pope of Rome,' with any starling in your Knight's ward," answered the constable, with a facetious air, checked, however, by the due respect to the superior presence in which he stood.

The Grim Feature relaxed into something like a smile as he heard the officer's observation: but instantly composing himself into the stern solemnity which for an instant had been disturbed, he looked fiercely at his new guest, and pronounced, with an awful and emphatic, yet rather an under-voice, the single and impressive word, "*Garnish!*"

Julian Peveril replied with assumed composure; for he had heard of the customs of such places, and was resolved to comply with them, so as if possible to obtain the favour of seeing his father, which he shrewdly guessed must depend on his gratifying the avarice of the keeper. "I am quite ready," he said, "to accede to the customs of the place in which I unhappily find myself. You have but to name your demands, and I will satisfy them."

So saying, he drew out his purse, thinking himself at the same time fortunate that he had retained about him a considerable sum of gold. The Captain remarked

its width, depth, its extension and depression, with an involuntary smile, which had scarce contorted his hanging under-lip, and the wiry and greasy mustache which thatched the upper, when it was checked by the recollection that there were regulations which set bounds to his rapacity, and prevented him from pouncing on his prey like a kite, and swooping it all off at once.

This chilling reflection produced the following sullen reply to Peveril:—"There were sundry rates. Gentlemen must choose for themselves. He asked nothing but his fees. But civility," he muttered, "must be paid for."

"And shall, if I can have it for payment," said Peveril; "but the price, my good sir, the price?"

He spoke with some degree of scorn, which he was the less anxious to repress, that he saw, even in this jail, his purse gave him an indirect but powerful influence over his jailer.

The Captain seemed to feel the same; for, as he spoke, he plucked from his head, almost involuntarily, a sort of scalded fur-cap, which served it for covering. But his fingers revolting from so unusual an act of complaisance, began to indemnify themselves by scratching his grizzly shock-head, as he muttered, in a tone resembling the softened growling of a mastiff when he has ceased to bay the intruder who shews no fear of him, —"There are different rates. There is the Little Ease, for common fees of the crown—rather dark, and the common-sewer runs below it; and some gentlemen

object to the company, who are chiefly padders and michers. Then the Master's side—the garnish came to one piece—and none lay stowed there but who were in for murder at the least."

"Name your highest price, sir, and take it," was Julian's concise reply.

"Three pieces for the Knight's ward," answered the governor of this terrestrial Tartarus.

"Take five, and place me with Sir Geoffrey," was again Julian's answer, throwing down the money upon the desk before him.

"Sir Geoffrey?—Hum!—ay, Sir Geoffrey," said the jailer, as if meditating what he ought to do. "Well, many a man has paid money to see Sir Geoffrey—Scarce so much as you have, though. But then you are like to see the last of him.—Ha, ha, ha!"

These broken muttered exclamations, which terminated somewhat like the joyous growl of a tiger over his meal, Julian could not comprehend; and only replied to by repeating his request to be placed in the same cell with Sir Geoffrey.

"Ay, master," said the jailer, "never fear; I'll keep word with you, as you seem to know something of what belongs to your station and mine. And hark ye, Jem Clink will fetch you the darbies."

"Derby!" interrupted Julian,—"Has the Earl or Countess——"

"Earl or Countess!—Ha, ha, ha!" again laughed, or rather growled, the warden. "What is your head running on? You are a high fellow, belike; but all is

one here. The darbies are the fetlocks—the fast-keepers, my boy—the bail for good behaviour, my darling; and if you are not the more conforming, I can add you a steel nightcap, and a curious bosom-friend to keep you warm of a winter night. But don't be disheartened; you have behaved genteel; and you shall not be put upon. And as for this here matter, ten to one it will turn out chance-medley, or manslaughter, at the worst on it; and then it is but a singed thumb instead of a twisted neck—always if there be no Papistry about it, for then I warrant nothing.—Take the gentleman's worship away, Clink."

A turnkey, who was one of the party that had ushered Peveril into the presence of this Cerberus, now conveyed him out in silence; and, under his guidance, the prisoner was carried through a second labyrinth of passages with cells opening on each side, to that which was destined for his reception.

On the road through this sad region, the turnkey more than once ejaculated, "Why, the gentleman must be stark-mad! Could have had the best crown cell to himself for less than half the garnish, and must pay double to pig in with Sir Geoffrey! Ha, ha!—Is Sir Geoffrey akin to you, if any one may make free to ask?"

"I am his son," answered Peveril, sternly, in hopes to impose some curb on the fellow's impertinence; but the man only laughed louder than before.

"His son!—Why, that's best of all—Why you are a strapping youth—five feet ten, if you be an inch—and Sir Geoffrey's son!—Ha, ha, ha!"

"Truce with your impertinence," said Julian. "My situation gives you no title to insult me!"

"No more I do," said the turnkey, smothering his mirth at the recollection, perhaps, that the prisoner's purse was not exhausted. "I only laughed because you said you were Sir Geoffrey's son. But no matter —'tis a wise child that knows his own father. And here is Sir Geoffrey's cell; so you and he may settle the fatherhood between you."

So saying, he ushered his prisoner into a cell, or rather a strong room of the better order, in which there were four chairs, a truckle-bed, and one or two other articles of furniture.

Julian looked eagerly around for his father; but to his surprise the room appeared totally empty. He turned with anger on the turnkey, and charged him with misleading him; but the fellow answered, "No, no, master; I have kept faith with you. Your father, if you call him so, is only tappiced in some corner. A small hole will hide him; but I'll rouse him out presently for you.—Here, hoicks!—Turn out, Sir Geoffrey!—Here is—Ha, ha, ha!—your son—or your wife's son—for I think you can have but little share in him—come to wait on you."

Peveril knew not how to resent the man's insolence; and indeed his anxiety, and apprehension of some strange mistake, mingled with, and in some degree neutralized his anger. He looked again and again, around and around the room; until at length he became aware of something rolled up in a dark corner, which

rather resembled a small bundle of crimson cloth than any living creature. At the vociferation of the turnkey, however, the object seemed to acquire life and motion—uncoiled itself in some degree, and, after an effort or two, gained an erect posture; still covered from top to toe with the crimson drapery in which it was at first wrapped. Julian, at the first glance, imagined from the size that he saw a child of five years old; but a shrill and peculiar tone of voice soon assured him of his mistake.

"Warder," said this unearthly sound, "what is the meaning of this disturbance? Have you more insults to heap on the head of one who hath ever been the butt of fortune's malice? But I have a soul that can wrestle with all my misfortunes; it is as large as any of your bodies."

"Nay, Sir Geoffrey, if this be the way you welcome your own son!" said the turnkey; "but you quality folks know your own ways best."

"My son!" exclaimed the little figure. "Audacious——"

"Here is some strange mistake," said Peveril, in the same breath. "I sought Sir Geoffrey——"

"And you have him before you, young man," said the pigmy tenant of the cell, with an air of dignity; at the same time casting on the floor his crimson cloak, and standing before them in his full dignity of three feet six inches of height. "I who was the favoured servant of three successive Sovereigns of the Crown of England, am now the tenant of this dungeon, and the sport of its brutal keepers. I am Sir Geoffrey Hudson."

Julian, though he had never before seen this impor-

tant personage, had no difficulty in recognizing, from description, the celebrated dwarf of Henrietta Maria, who had survived the dangers of civil war and private quarrel—the murder of his royal master, Charles I., and the exile of his widow—to fall upon evil tongues and evil days, amidst the unsparing accusations connected with the Popish Plot. He bowed to the unhappy old man, and hastened to explain to him, and to the turnkey, that it was Sir Geoffrey Peveril, of Martindale Castle in Derbyshire, whose prison he had desired to share.

"You should have said that before you parted with the gold-dust, my master," answered the turnkey; for t'other Sir Geoffrey, that is the big, tall, gray-haired man, was sent to the Tower last night; and the Captain will think he has kept his word well enow with you, by lodging you with this here Sir Geoffrey Hudson, who is the better show of the two."

"I pray you go to your master," said Peveril; "explain the mistake; and say to him I beg to be sent to the Tower."

"The Tower!—Ha, ha, ha!" exclaimed the fellow. "The Tower is for lords and knights, and not for squires of low degree—for high treason, and not for ruffling on the streets with rapier and dagger; and there must go a secretary's warrant to send you there."

"At least, let me not be a burden on this gentleman," said Julian. "There can be no use in quartering us together, since we are not even acquainted. Go tell your master of the mistake."

"Why, so I should," said Clink, still grinning, "if I were not sure that he knew it already. You paid to be sent to Sir Geoffrey, and he sent you to Sir Geoffrey. You are so put down in the register, and he will blot it for no man. Come, come, be conformable, and you shall have light and easy irons—that's all I can do for you."

Resistance and expostulation being out of the question, Peveril submitted to have a light pair of fetters secured on his ankles, which allowed him, nevertheless, the power of traversing the apartment.

During this operation, he reflected that the jailer, who had taken advantage of the equivoque betwixt the two Sir Geoffreys, must have acted as his assistant had hinted, and cheated him from malice prepense, since the warrant of committal described him as the son of Sir Geoffrey Peveril. It was therefore in vain, as well as degrading, to make farther application to such a man on the subject. Julian determined to submit to his fate, as what could not be averted by any effort of his own.

Even the turnkey was moved in some degree by his youth, good mien, and the patience with which, after the first effervescence of disappointment, the new prisoner resigned himself to his situation. "You seem a brave young gentlemen," he said; "and shall at least have a good dinner, and as good a pallet to sleep on, as is within the walls of Newgate.—And, Master Sir Geoffrey, you ought to make much of him, since you do not like tall fellows; for I can tell you that Master Peveril is in for pinking long Jack Jenkins, that was

the Master of Defence—as tall a man as is in always excepting the King's Porter, Master Ev carried you about in his pocket, Sir Geoffrey, a world has heard tell."

"Begone, fellow!" answered the dwarf. ' I scorn you!"

The turnkey sneered, withdrew, and locked behind him.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FOURTH.

> Degenerate youth, though not of Tydeus' kind,
> Whose little body lodged a mighty mind.
>
> ILIAD.

LEFT quite at least, if not alone, for the first time after the events of this troubled and varied day, Julian threw himself on an old oaken seat, beside the embers of a sea-coal fire, and began to muse on the miserable situation of anxiety and danger in which he was placed; where, whether he contemplated the interests of his love, his family affections, or his friendships, all seemed such a prospect as that of a sailor who looks upon breakers on every hand, from the deck of a vessel which no longer obeys the helm.

As Peveril sat sunk in despondency, his companion in misfortune drew a chair to the opposite side of the

chimney-corner, and began to gaze at him with a sort of solemn earnestness, which at length compelled him, though almost in spite of himself, to pay some attention to the singular figure who seemed so much engrossed with contemplating him.

Geoffrey Hudson (we drop occasionally the title of knighthood, which the King had bestowed on him in a frolic, but which might introduce some confusion into our history), although a dwarf of the least possible size, had nothing positively ugly in his countenance, or actually distorted in his limbs. His head, hands, and feet, were indeed large, and disproportioned to the height of his body, and his body itself much thicker than was consistent with symmetry, but in a degree which was rather ludicrous than disagreeable to look upon. His countenance, in particular, had he been a little taller, would have been accounted, in youth, handsome, and now, in age, striking and expressive; it was but the uncommon disproportion betwixt the head and the trunk which made the features seem whimsical and bizarre—an effect which was considerably increased by the dwarf's mustaches, which it was his pleasure to wear so large, that they almost twisted back amongst, and mingled with his grizzled hair.

The dress of this singular wight announced that he was not entirely free from the unhappy taste which frequently induces those whom nature has marked by personal deformity, to distinguish, and at the same time to render themselves ridiculous, by the use of showy colours, and garments fantastically and extraordinarily

fashioned. But poor Geoffrey Hudson's laces, embroideries, and the rest of his finery, were sorely worn and tarnished by the time which he had spent in jail, under the vague and malicious accusation that he was somehow or other an accomplice in this all-involving, all-devouring whirlpool of a Popish conspiracy—an impeachment which, if pronounced by a mouth the foulest and most malicious, was at that time sufficiently predominant to sully the fairest reputation. It will presently appear, that in the poor man's manner of thinking, and tone of conversation, there was something analogous to his absurd fashion of apparel; for, as in the latter, good stuff and valuable decorations were rendered ludicrous by the fantastic fashion in which they were made up; so, such glimmerings of good sense and honourable feeling as the little man often evinced, were made ridiculous by a restless desire to assume certain airs of importance, and a great jealousy of being despised, on account of the peculiarity of his outward form.

After the fellow-prisoners, had looked at each other for some time in silence, the dwarf, conscious of his dignity as first owner of their joint apartment, thought it necessary to do the honours of it to the new-comer. "Sir," he said, modifying the alternate harsh and squeaking tones of his voice into accents as harmonious as they could attain, "I understand you to be the son of my worthy namesake, and ancient acquaintance, the stout Sir Geoffrey Peveril of the Peak. I promise you, I have seen your father where blows have been going

more plenty than gold pieces; and for a tall heavy man, who lacked, as we martialists thought, some of the lightness and activity of our more slightly made Cavaliers, he performed his duty as a man might desire. I am happy to see you, his son; and, though by a mistake, I am glad we are to share this comfortless cabin together."

Julian bowed and thanked his courtesy; and Geoffrey Hudson, having broken the ice, proceeded to question him without farther ceremony. "You are no courtier, I presume, young gentleman?"

Julian replied in the negative.

"I thought so," continued the dwarf; "for although I have now no official duty at Court, the region in which my early years were spent, and where I once held a considerable office, yet I still, when I had my liberty, visited the Presence from time to time, as in duty bound for former service; and am wont, from old habit, to take some note of the courtly gallants, those choice spirits of the age, among whom I was once enrolled. You are, not to compliment you, a marked figure, Master Peveril—though something of the tallest, as was your father's case; I think, I could scarce have seen you anywhere without remembering you."

Peveril thought he might, with great justice, have returned the compliment, but contented himself with saying, "he had scarce seen the British Court."

"'Tis pity," said Hudson; "a gallant can hardly be formed without frequenting it. But you have been

perhaps in a rougher school; you have served, doubtless?"

"My Maker, I hope," said Julian.

"Fie on it, you mistake. I meant," said Hudson, "*à la Françoise*,—you have served in the army?"

"No. I have not yet had that honour," said Julian.

"What! neither courtier nor soldier, Master Peveril?" said the important little man: "Your father is to blame. By cock and pie he is, Master Peveril! How shall a man be known, or distinguished, unless by his bearing in peace and war; I tell you, sir, that at Newberry, where I charged with my troop abreast with Prince Rupert, and when, as you may have heard, we were both beaten off by those cuckoldly hinds the Trained Bands of London,—we did what men could; and I think it was a matter of three or four minutes after most of our gentlemen had been driven off, that his Highness and I continued to cut at their long pikes with our swords; and I think might have broken in, but that I had a tall, long-legged brute of a horse, and my sword was somewhat short,—in fine, at last we were obliged to make volte-face, and then, as I was going to say, the fellows were so glad to get rid of us, that they set up a great jubilee cry of 'There goes Prince Robin and Cock Robin!'—Ay, ay, every scoundrel among them knew me well. But those days are over.—And where were you educated, young gentleman?"

Peveril named the household of the Countess of Derby.

"A most honourable lady, upon my word as a gentleman," said Hudson.—"I knew the noble Countess well, when I was about the person of my royal mistress, Henrietta Maria. She was then the very muster of all that was noble, loyal, and lovely. She was, indeed, one of the fifteen fair ones of the Court, whom I permitted to call me Piccoluomini; a foolish jest on my somewhat diminutive figure, which always distinguished me from ordinary beings, even when I was young—I have now lost much stature by stooping; but, always the ladies had their jest at me.—Perhaps, young man, I had my own amends of some of them somewhere, and somehow or other—I *say* nothing if I had or no, far less do I insinuate disrespect to the noble Countess. She was daughter of the Duc de la Tremouille, or, more correctly, Des Thouars. But certainly to serve the ladies, and condescend to their humours, even when somewhat too free, or too fantastic, is the true decorum of gentle blood."

Depressed as his spirits were, Peveril could scarce forbear smiling when he looked at the pigmy creature, who told these stories with infinite complacency, and appeared disposed to proclaim, as his own herald, that he had been a very model of valour and gallantry, though love and arms seemed to be pursuits totally irreconcilable to his shrivelled, weatherbeaten countenance, and wasted limbs. Julian was, however, so careful to avoid giving his companion pain, that he endeavoured to humour him, by saying, that, "unquestionably, one bred up like Sir Geoffrey Hudson, in

courts and camps, knew exactly when to suffer personal freedoms, and when to control them."

The little Knight, with great vivacity, though with some difficulty, began to drag his seat from the side of the fire opposite to that where Julian was seated, and at length succeeded in bringing it near him, in token of increasing cordiality.

"You say well, Master Peveril," said the dwarf; "and I have given proofs both of bearing and forbearing. Yes, sir, there was not that thing which my most royal mistress, Henrietta Maria, could have required of me, that I would not have complied with, sir; I was her sworn servant, both in war and in festival, in battle and pageant, sir. At her Majesty's particular request, I once condescended to become—ladies, you know, have strange fancies—to become the tenant, for a time, of the interior of a pie."

"Of a pie!" said Julian, somewhat amazed.

"Yes, sir, of a pie. I hope you find nothing risible in my complaisance?" replied his companion something jealously.

"Not I, sir," said Peveril; "I have other matters than laughter in my head at present."

"So had I," said the dwarfish champion, "when I found myself imprisoned in a huge platter, of no ordinary dimensions you may be assured, since I could lie at length in it, and when I was entombed, as it were, in walls of standing crust, and a huge cover of pastry, the whole constituting a sort of sarcophagus, of size enough to have recorded the epitaph of a general officer

or an archbishop on the lid. Sir, notwithstanding the conveniences which were made to give me air, it was more like being buried alive than aught else which I could think of."*

"I conceive it, sir," said Julian.

"Moreover, sir," continued the dwarf, "there were few in the secret, which was contrived for the Queen's divertisement; for advancing of which I would have crept into a filbert nut, had it been possible; and few, as I said, being private in the scheme, there was a risk of accidents. I doubted, while in my darksome abode, whether some awkward attendant might not have let me fall, as I have seen happen to a venison pasty; or whether some hungry guest might not anticipate the moment of my resurrection, by sticking his knife into my upper crust. And though I had my weapons about me, young man, as has been my custom in every case of peril, yet, if such a rash person had plunged deep into the bowels of the supposed pasty, my sword, and dagger could barely have served me to avenge, assuredly not to prevent, either of these catastrophes."

"Certainly I do so understand it," said Julian, who began, however, to feel that the company of little Hudson, talkative as he shewed himself, was likely rather to aggravate than to alleviate the inconveniences of a prison.

"Nay," continued the little man, enlarging on his former topic, "I had other subjects of apprehension; for it pleased my Lord of Buckingham, his Grace's

* Note B. Geoffrey Hudson.

father who now bears the title, in his plenitude of Court favour, to command the pasty to be carried down to the office, and committed anew to the oven, alleging preposterously that it was better to be eaten warm than cold."

"And did this, sir, not disturb your equanimity?" said Julian.

"My young friend," said Geoffrey Hudson, "I cannot deny it.—Nature will claim her rights from the best and boldest of us.—I thought of Nebuchadnezzar and his fiery furnace; and I waxed warm with apprehension.—But, I thank Heaven, I also thought of my sworn duty to my royal mistress; and was thereby obliged and enabled to resist all temptations to make myself prematurely known. Nevertheless, the Duke —if of malice, may Heaven forgive him—followed down into the office himself, and urged the master-cook, very hard that the pasty should be heated, were it but for five minutes. But the master-cook, being privy to the very different intentions of my royal mistress, did most manfully resist the order; and I was again reconveyed in safety to the royal table."

"And in due time liberated from your confinement, I doubt not?" said Peveril.

"Yes, sir; that happy, and I may say glorious moment, at length arrived," continued the dwarf. "The upper crust was removed—I started up to the sound of trumpet and clarion, like the soul of a warrior when the last summons shall sound—or rather (if that simile be over audacious), like a spell-bound champion relieved

from his enchanted state. It was then that, with my buckler on my arm, and my trusty Bilboa in my hand, I executed a sort of warlike dance, in which my skill and agility then rendered me pre-eminent, displaying, at the same time, my postures, both of defence and offence, in a manner so totally inimitable, that I was almost deafened with the applause of all around me, and half-drowned by the scented waters with which the ladies of the Court deluged me from their casting-bottles. I had amends of his Grace of Buckingham also; for as I tripped a hasty morris hither and thither upon the dining-table, now offering my blade, now recovering it, I made a blow at his nose—a sort of estramaçon—the dexterity of which consists in coming mighty near to the object you seem to aim at, yet not attaining it. You may have seen a barber make such a flourish with his razor. I promise you his Grace sprung back a half-yard at least. He was pleased to threaten to brain me with a chicken bone, as he disdainfully expressed it; but the King said, 'George, you have but a Rowland for an Oliver.' And so I tripped on, shewing a bold heedlessness of his displeasure, which few dared to have done at that time, albeit countenanced to the utmost like me by the smiles of the brave and the fair. But, well-a-day! sir, youth, its fashions, its follies, its frolics, and all its pomp and pride, are as idle and transitory as the crackling of thorns under a pot."

"The flower that is cast into the oven were a better simile," thought Peveril. "Good God, that a man should live to regret not being young enough to

be still treated as baked meat, and served up in a pie!"

His companion, whose tongue had for many days been as closely imprisoned as his person, seemed resolved to indemnify his loquacity, by continuing to indulge it on the present occasion at his companion's expense. He proceeded, therefore, in a solemn tone, to moralize on the adventure which he had narrated.

"Young men will no doubt think one to be envied," he said, "who was thus enabled to be the darling and admiration of the Court"—(Julian internally stood self-exculpated from the suspicion)—"and yet it is better to possess fewer means of distinction, and remain free from the backbiting, the slander, and the odium, which are always the share of Court favour. Men who had no other cause, cast reflections upon me because my size varied somewhat from the common proportion; and jests were sometimes unthinkingly passed upon me by those I was bound to, who did not in that case, peradventure, sufficiently consider that the wren is made by the same hand which formed the bustard, and that the diamond, though small in size, outvalues ten thousandfold the rude granite. Nevertheless, they proceeded in the vein of humour; and as I could not in duty or gratitude retort upon nobles and princes, I was compelled to cast about in my mind how to vindicate my honour towards those, who, being in the same rank with myself as servants and courtiers, nevertheless, bore themselves towards me as if they were of a superior class in the rank of honour, as well as in the accidental

circumstance of stature. And as a lesson to my own pride, and that of others, it so happened, that the pageant which I have but just narrated—which I justly reckon the most honourable moment of my life, excepting perhaps my distinguished share in the battle of Round-way-down—became the cause of a most tragic event, in which I acknowledge the greatest misfortune of my existence."

The dwarf here paused, fetched a sigh, big at once with regret, and with the importance becoming the subject of a tragic history; then proceeded as follows:—

"You would have thought in your simplicity, young gentleman, that the pretty pageant I have mentioned could only have been quoted to my advantage, as a rare masking frolic, prettily devised, and not less deftly executed; and yet the malice of the courtiers, who maligned and envied me, made them strain their wit, and exhaust their ingenuity, in putting false and ridiculous constructions upon it. In short, my ears were so much offended with allusions to pies, puff-paste, ovens, and the like, that I was compelled to prohibit such subject of mirth, under penalty of my instant and severe displeasure. But it happ'd there was then a gallant about the Court, a man of good quality, son to a knight baronet, and in high esteem with the best in that sphere, also a familiar friend of mine own, from whom, therefore, I had no reason to expect any of that species of gibing, which I had intimated my purpose to treat as offensive. Howbeit, it pleased the honourable Mr. Crofts, so was this youth called and designed, one

night, at the Groom Porter's, being full of wine and waggery, to introduce this threadbare subject, and to say something concerning a goose-pie, which I could not but consider as levelled at me. Nevertheless, I did but calmly and solidly pray him to choose a different subject; failing which, I let him know I should be sudden in my resentment. Notwithstanding, he continued in the same tone, and even aggravated the offence, by speaking of a tom-tit, and other unnecessary and obnoxious comparisons; whereupon I was compelled to send him a cartel, and we met accordingly. Now, as I really loved the youth, it was my intention only to correct him by a flesh wound or two; and I would willingly that he had named the sword for his weapon. Nevertheless, he made pistols his election; and being on horseback, he produced, by way of his own weapon, a foolish engine which children are wont, in their roguery, to use for spouting water; a—a—in short I forget the name."

"A squirt, doubtless," said Peveril, who began to recollect having heard something of this adventure.

"You are right," said the dwarf; "you have indeed the name of the little engine, of which I have had experience in passing the yards at Westminster.—Well, sir, this token of slight regard compelled me to give the gentleman such language, as soon rendered it necessary for him to take more serious arms. We fought on horseback—breaking ground, and advancing by signal; and, as I never miss aim, I had the misadventure to kill the Honourable Master Crofts at the

first shot. I would not wish my worst foe the pain which I felt, when, I saw him reel on his saddle, and so fall down to the earth!—and, when I perceived that the life-blood was pouring fast, I could not but wish to Heaven that it had been my own instead of his. Thus fell youth, hopes, and bravery, a sacrifice to a silly and thoughtless jest; yet, alas! wherein had I choice, seeing that honour is, as it were, the very breath in our nostrils; and that in no sense can we be said to live, if we permit ourselves to be deprived of it?"

The tone of feeling in which the dwarfish hero concluded his story, gave Julian a better opinion of his heart, and even of his understanding, than he had been able to form of one who gloried in having, upon a grand occasion, formed the contents of a pasty. He was indeed enabled to conjecture that the little champion was seduced into such exhibitions, by the necessity attached to his condition, by his own vanity, and by the flattery bestowed on him by those who sought pleasure in practical jokes. The fate of the unlucky Master Crofts, however, as well as various exploits of this diminutive person during the Civil Wars, in which he actually, and with great gallantry, commanded a troop of horse, rendered most men cautious of openly rallying him; which was indeed the less necessary, as when left alone, he seldom failed voluntarily to shew himself on the ludicrous side.

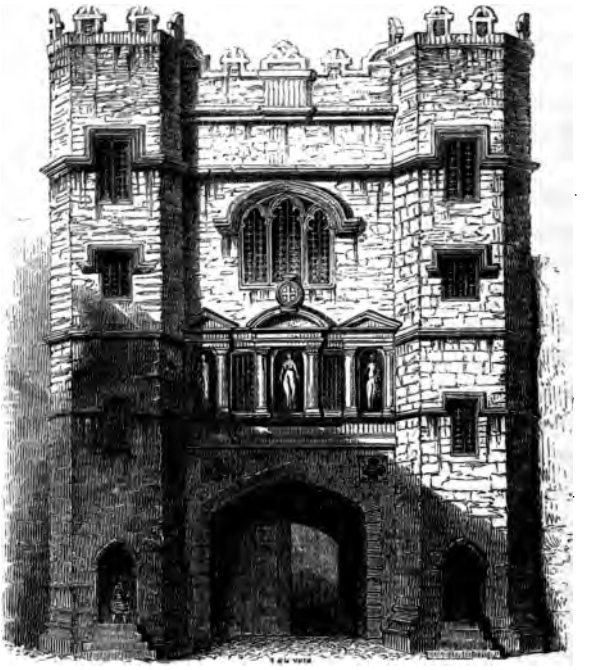
At one hour after noon, the turnkey, true to his word, supplied the prisoners with a very tolerable dinner and a flask of well-flavoured, though light claret;

which the old man, who was something of a bon-vivant, regretted to observe, was nearly as diminutive as himself. The evening also passed away, but not without continued symptoms of garrulity on the part of Geoffrey Hudson.

It is true these were of a graver character than he had hitherto exhibited, for when the flask was empty, he repeated a long Latin prayer. But the religious act in which he had been engaged, only gave his discourse a more serious turn than belonged to his former themes, of war, lady's love, and courtly splendour.

The little Knight harangued, at first on polemical points of divinity, and diverged from this thorny path, into the neighbouring and twilight walk of mysticism. He talked of secret warnings—of the predictions of sad-eyed prophets—of the visits of monitory spirits, and the Rosicrucian secrets of the Cabala; all which topics he treated of with such apparent conviction, nay, with so many appeals to personal experience, that one would have supposed him a member of the fraternity of gnomes, or fairies, whom he resembled so much in point of size.

In short, he persevered for a stricken hour in such a torrent of unnecessary tattle, as determined Peveril, at all events, to endeavour to procure a separate lodging. Having repeated his evening prayers in Latin, as formerly (for the old gentleman was a Catholic, which was the sole cause of his falling under suspicion), he set off on a new score, as they were undressing; and continued to prattle, until he had fairly talked both himself and his companion to sleep.



CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FIFTH.

Of airy tongues that syllable men's names.
COMUS.

JULIAN had fallen asleep, with his brain rather filled with his own sad reflections, than with the mystical lore of the little Knight; and yet it seemed as if in his

visions the latter had been more present to his mind than the former.

He dreamed of gliding spirits, gibbering phantoms, bloody hands, which, dimly seen by twilight, seemed to beckon him forward like errant-knight on sad adventure bound. More than once he started from his sleep, so lively was the influence of these visions on his imagination; and he always awaked under the impression that some one stood by his bedside. The chillness of his ankles, the weight and clatter of the fetters, as he turned himself on his pallet, reminded him on these occasions where he was, and under what circumstances. The extremity to which he saw all that was dear to him at present reduced, struck a deeper cold on his heart than the iron upon his limbs; nor could he compose himself again to rest without a mental prayer to Heaven for protection. But when he had been for a third time awakened from repose by these thick-stirring fancies, his distress of mind vented itself in speech, and he was unable to suppress the almost despairing ejaculation, "God have mercy upon us!"

"Amen!" answered a voice as sweet and "soft as honey dew," which sounded as if the words were spoken close by his bedside.

The natural inference was, that Geoffrey Hudson, his companion in calamity, had echoed the prayer which was so proper to the situation of both. But the tone of voice was so different from the harsh and dissonant sounds of the dwarf's enunciation, that Peveril was impressed with the certainty it could not proceed from

Hudson. He was struck with involuntary terror, for which he could give no sufficient reason; and it was not without an effort that he was able to utter the question, "Sir Geoffrey, did you speak?"

No answer was returned. He repeated the question louder; and the same silver-toned voice, which had formerly said "*Amen*" to his prayers, answered to his interrogatory, "Your companion will not awake while I am here."

"And who are you?—What seek you?—How came you into this place?" said Peveril, huddling, eagerly, question upon question.

"I am a wretched being, but one who loves you well.—I come for your good.—Concern yourself no farther."

It now rushed on Julian's mind, that he had heard of persons possessed of the wonderful talent of counterfeiting sounds to such accuracy, that they could impose on their hearers the belief, that they proceeded from a point of the apartment entirely opposite to that which the real speaker occupied. Persuaded that he had now gained the depth of the mystery, he replied, "This trifling, Sir Geoffrey, is unseasonable. Say what you have to say in your own voice and manner. These apish pleasantries do not become midnight in a Newgate dungeon."

"But the being who speaks with you," answered the voice, "is fitted for the darkest hour, and the most melancholy haunts."

Impatient of suspense, and determined to satisfy his

curiosity, Julian jumped at once from his pallet, hoping to secure the speaker, whose voice indicated he was so near. But he altogether failed in his attempt, and grasped nothing save thin air.

For a turn or two, Peveril shuffled at random about the room, with his arms extended; and then at last recollected, that with the impediment of his shackles, and the noise which necessarily accompanied his motions, and announced where he was, it would be impossible for him to lay hands on any one who might be disposed to keep out of his reach. He therefore endeavoured to return to his bed, but, in groping for his way, lighted first on that of his fellow-prisoner. The little captive slept deep and heavy, as was evinced from his breathing; and upon listening a moment, Julian became again certain, either that his companion was the most artful of ventriloquists and of dissemblers, or that there was actually within the precincts of that guarded chamber, some third being, whose very presence there seemed to intimate that it belonged not to the ordinary line of humanity.

Julian was no ready believer in the supernatural; but that age was very far from being so incredulous concerning ghostly occurrences as our own; and it was no way derogatory to his good sense, that he shared the prejudices of his time. His hair began to bristle, and the moisture to stand on his brow, as he called on his companion to awake, for Heaven's sake.

The dwarf answered—but he spoke without awaking.—"The day may dawn and be d—d. Tell the

master of the horse I will not go to the hunting, unless I have the little black jennet."

"I tell you," said Julian, "there is some one in the apartment. Have you not a tinder-box to strike a light?"

"I care not how slight my horse be," replied the slumberer, pursuing his own train of ideas, which, doubtless, carried him back to the green woods of Windsor, and the royal deer-hunts which he had witnessed there. "I am not overweight.—I will not ride that great Holstein brute, that I must climb up to by a ladder, and then sit on his back like a pin-cushion on an elephant."

Julian at length put his hand to the sleeper's shoulder, and shook him, so as to awake him from his dream; when, after two or three snorts and groans, the dwarf asked, peevishly, what the devil ailed him?

"The devil himself, for what I know," said Peveril, "is at this very moment in the room here beside us."

The dwarf on this information started up, crossed himself, and began to hammer a flint and steel with all despatch, until he had lighted a little piece of candle, which he said was consecrated to Saint Bridget, and as powerful as the herb called *fuga dæmonum*, or the liver of the fish burnt by Tobit in the house of Raguel, for chasing all goblins, and evil or dubious spirits, from the place of its radiance; "if, indeed," as the dwarf carefully guarded his proposition, "they existed anywhere, save in the imagination of his fellow-prisoner."

Accordingly, the apartment was no sooner en-

lightened by this holy candle's end, than Julian began to doubt the evidence of his own ears; for not only was there no one in the room save Sir Geoffrey Hudson and himself, but all the fastenings of the door were so secure, that it seemed impossible that they could have been opened and again fixed, without a great deal of noise, which, on the last occasion at least, could not possibly have escaped his ears, seeing that he must have been on his feet, and employed in searching the chamber, when the unknown, if an earthly being, was in the act of retreating from it.

Julian gazed for a moment with great earnestness, and no little perplexity, first on the bolted door, then on the grated window; and began to accuse his own imagination of having played him an unpleasant trick. He answered little to the questions of Hudson, and, returning to his bed, heard, in silence, a long studied oration on the merits of Saint Bridget, which comprehended the greater part of her long-winded legend, and concluded with the assurance, that, from all accounts preserved of her, that holy saint was the least of all possible women, except those of the pigmy kind.

By the time the dwarf had ceased to speak, Julian's desire of sleep had returned; and after a few glances around the apartment, which was still illuminated by the expiring beams of the holy taper, his eyes were again closed in forgetfulness, and his repose was not again disturbed in the course of that night.

Morning dawns on Newgate, as well as on the freest mountain-turf which Welshman or wild-goat ever

trod; but in so different a fashion, that the very beams of heaven's precious sun, when they penetrate into the recesses of the prison-house, have the air of being committed to jail. Still, with the light of day around him, Peveril easily persuaded himself of the vanity of his preceding night's visions; and smiled when he reflected that fancies, similar to those to which his ear was often exposed in the Isle of Man, had been able to arrange themselves in a manner so impressive, when he heard them from the mouth of so singular a character as Hudson, and in the solitude of a prison.

Before Julian had awaked, the dwarf had already quitted his bed, and was seated in the chimney-corner of the apartment, where, with his own hands, he had arranged a morsel of fire, partly attending to the simmering of a small pot, which he had placed on the flame, partly occupied with a huge folio volume which lay on the table before him, and seemed well-nigh as tall and bulky as himself. He was wrapped up in the dusky crimson cloak already mentioned, which served him for a morning-gown, as well as a mantle against the cold, and which corresponded with a large montero cap, that enveloped his head. The singularity of his features, and of the eyes, armed with spectacles, which were now cast on the subject of his studies, now directed towards his little caldron, would have tempted Rembrandt to exhibit him on canvas, either in the character of an alchymist, or of a necromancer, engaged in some strange experiment, under the direction of one

of the huge manuals which treat of the theory of these mystic arts.

The attention of the dwarf was bent, however, upon a more domestic object. He was only preparing soup, of no unsavoury quality, for breakfast, which he invited Peveril to partake with him. "I am an old soldier," he said, "and, I must add, an old prisoner; and understand how to shift for myself better than you can do, young man.—Confusion to the scoundrel Clink, he has put the spice box out of my reach!—Will you hand it me from the mantelpiece?—I will teach you, as the French have it, *faire la cuisine;* and then, if you please, we will divide, like brethren, the labours of our prison-house."

Julian readily assented to the little man's friendly proposal, without interposing any doubt as to his continuing an inmate of the same cell. Truth is, that although, upon the whole, he was inclined to regard the whispering voice of the preceding evening as the impression of his own excited fancy, he felt, nevertheless, curiosity to see how a second night was to pass over in the same cell; and the tone of the invisible intruder, which at midnight had been heard by him with terror, now excited on recollection a gentle and not unpleasing species of agitation—the combined effect of awe, and of awakened curiosity.

Days of captivity have little to mark them as they glide away. That which followed the night which we have described, afforded no circumstance of note. The dwarf imparted to his youthful companion a volume

similar to that which formed his own studies, and which proved to be a tome of one of Scuderi's now forgotten romances, of which Geoffrey Hudson was a great admirer, and which were then very fashionable both at the French and English Courts; although they contrive to unite in their immense folios all the improbabilities and absurdities of the old romances of chivalry, without that tone of imagination which prevades them, and all the metaphysical absurdities which Cowley and the poets of the age had heaped upon the passion of love, like so many load of small-coal upon a slender fire, which it smothers instead of aiding.

But Julian had no alternative, saving only to muse over the sorrows of Artamenes and Mandane, or on the complicated distresses of his own situation; and in these disagreeable divertisements, the morning crept through as it could.

Noon first, and thereafter nightfall, were successively marked by a brief visit from their stern turnkey, who, with noiseless step and sullen demeanour, did in silence the necessary offices about the meals of the prisoners, exchanging with them as few words as an official in the Spanish Inquisition might have permitted himself upon a similar occasion. With the same taciturn gravity, very different from the laughing humour into which he had been surprised on a former occasion, he struck their fetters with a small hammer, to ascertain, by the sound thus produced, whether they had been tampered with by file or otherwise. He next mounted on a table, to make the same experiment on the window-grating.

Julian's heart throbbed; for might not one of those grates have been so tampered with as to give entrance to the nocturnal visitant? But they returned to the experienced ear of Master Clink, when he struck them in turn with the hammer, a clear and ringing sound, which assured him of their security.

"It would be difficult for any one to get in through these defences," said Julian, giving vent in words to his own feelings.

"Few wish that," answered the surly groom, misconstruing what was passing in Peveril's mind; "and let me tell you, master, folks will find it quite as difficult to get out." He retired, and night came on.

The dwarf, who took upon himself for the day the whole duties of the apartment, trundled about the room, making a most important clutter as he extinguished their fire, and put aside various matters which had been in use in the course of the day, talking to himself all the while in a tone of no little consequence, occasionally grounded on the dexterity with which an old soldier could turn his hand to every thing; and at other times, on the wonder that a courtier of the first rank should condescend to turn his hand to any thing. Then came the repetition of his accustomed prayers; but his disposition to converse did not, as on the former occasion, revive after his devotions. On the contrary, long before Julian had closed an eye, the heavy breathing from Sir Geoffrey Hudson's pallet declared that the dwarf was already in the arms of Morpheus.

Amid the total darkness of the apartment, and with a longing desire, and at the same time no small fear, for the recurrence of the mysterious address of the preceding evening, Julian lay long awake without his thoughts receiving any interruption, save when the clock told the passing hour from the neighbouring steeple of St. Sepulchre. At length he sunk into slumber; but had not slept, to his judgment, above an hour, when he was roused by the sound which his waking ear had so long expected in vain.

"Can you sleep?—Will you sleep?—Dare you sleep?" were the questions impressed on his ear, in the same clear, soft, and melodious voice, which had addressed him on the preceding night.

"Who is it asks me the question?" answered Julian. "But be the questioner good or evil, I reply that I am a guiltless prisoner; and that innocence may wish and dare to sleep soundly."

"Ask no questions of me," said the voice; neither attempt to discover who speaks to you; and be assured that folly alone can sleep, with fraud around and danger before him."

"Can you, who tell me of dangers, counsel me how to combat or how to avoid them?" said Julian.

"My power is limited," said the voice; "yet something I can do, as a glow-worm can shew a precipice. But you must confide in me."

"Confidence must beget confidence," answered Julian. "I cannot repose trust in I know not what or whom."

"Speak not so loud," replied the voice, sinking almost into a whisper.

"Last night you said my companion would not awake," said Julian.

"To-night I warrant not that he shall sleep," said the voice. And as it spoke, the hoarse, snatching, discordant tones of the dwarf were heard, demanding of Julian why he talked in his sleep—wherefore he did not rest himself, and let other people rest—and, finally, whether his visions of last night were returned upon him again?

"Say yes," said the voice, in a whisper, so low, yet so distinct, that Julian almost doubted whether it was not an echo of his own thought,—"Say but yes—and I part to return no more!"

In desperate circumstances men look to strange and unusual remedies; and although unable to calculate the chances of advantage which this singular communication opened to him, Julian did not feel inclined to let them at once escape from him. He answered the dwarf that he had been troubled by an alarming dream.

"I could have sworn it from the sound of your voice," said Hudson. "It is strange, now, that you overgrown men never possess the extreme firmness of nerves proper to us who are cast in a more compact mould. My own voice retains its masculine sounds on all occasions. Dr. Cockerel was of opinion, that there was the same allowance of nerve and sinew to men of every size, and that nature spun the stock out thinner or stronger, according to the extent of surface which they were to cover. Hence,

the least creatures are oftentimes the strongest. Place a beetle under a tall candlestick, and the insect will move it by its efforts to get out; which is, in point of comparative strength, as if one of us should shake his Majesty's prison of Newgate by similar struggles. Cats also, and weasels, are creatures of greater exertion and endurance than dogs or sheep. And in general, you may remark, that little men dance better, and are more unwearied under exertion of every kind, than those to whom their own weight must necessarily be burdensome. I respect you, Master Peveril, because I am told you have killed one of those gigantic fellows, who go about swaggering as if their souls were taller than ours, because their noses are nearer to the clouds by a cubit or two. But do not value yourself on this, as any thing very unusual. I would have you to know it hath been always thus; and that, in the history of all ages, the clean, tight, dapper, little fellow, hath proved an overmatch for his bulky antagonist. I need only instance, out of holy writ, the celebrated downfall of Goliah, and of another lubbard, who had more fingers to his hand, and more inches to his stature, than ought to belong to an honest man, and who was slain by a nephew of good King David; and of many others whom I do not remember; nevertheless, they were all Philistines of gigantic stature. In the classics, also, you have Tydeus, and other tight, compact heroes, whose diminutive bodies were the abode of large minds. And indeed you may observe, in sacred as well as profane history, that your giants are ever heretics and blasphemers,

robbers and oppressors, outragers of the female sex, and scoffers at regular authority. Such were Gog and Magog, whom our authentic chronicles vouch to have been slain near to Plymouth, by the good little Knight Corineus, who gave name to Cornwall. Ascaparte also was subdued by Bevis, and Colbrand by Guy, as Southampton and Warwick can testify. Like unto these was the giant Hoel, slain in Bertagne by King Arthur. And if Ryence, King of North Wales, who was done to death by the same worthy champion of Christendom, be not actually termed a giant, it is plain he was little better, since he required twenty-four kings' beards, which were then worn full and long, to fur his gown; whereby computing, each beard at eighteen inches (and you cannot allow less for a beard-royal,) and supposing only the front of the gown trimmed therewith, as we use ermine; and that the back was mounted and lined, instead of cat-skins and squirrels' fur, with the beards of earls and dukes, and other inferior dignitaries—may amount to——But I will work the question to-morrow."

Nothing is more soporific to any (save a philosopher or monied man) than the operation of figures; and when in bed, the effect is irresistible. Sir Geoffrey fell asleep in the act of calculating King Ryence's height, from the supposed length of his mantle. Indeed, had he not stumbled on this abstruse subject of calculation, there is no guessing how long he might have held forth upon the superiority of men of little stature, which was so great a favourite with him, that,

numerous as such narratives are, the dwarf had collected almost all the instances of their victories over giants, which history or romance afforded.

No sooner had unequivocal signs of the dwarf's sound slumbers reached Julian's ears, than he began again to listen eagerly for the renewal of that mysterious communication which was at once interesting and awful. Even whilst Hudson was speaking, he had, instead of bestowing his attention upon his eulogy on persons of low stature, kept his ears on watchful guard, to mark, if possible, the lightest sounds of any sort which might occur in the apartment; so that he thought it scarce possible that even a fly should have left it without its motion being overheard. If, therefore, his invisible monitor was indeed a creature of this world—an opinion which Julian's sound sense rendered him unwilling to renounce—that being could not have left the apartment; and he waited impatiently for a renewal of their communication. He was disappointed; not the slightest sound reached his ear; and the nocturnal visiter, if still in the room, appeared determined on silence.

It was in vain that Peveril coughed, hemmed, and gave other symptoms of being awake; at length, such became his impatience, that he resolved, at any risk to speak first, in hopes of renewing the communication betwixt them. "Whoever thou art," he said, in a voice loud enough to be heard by a waking person, but not so high as to disturb his sleeping companion—"Whoever, or whatever thou art, that hast shewn some

interest in the fate of such a castaway as Julian Peveril, speak once more, I conjure thee; and be your communication for good or evil, believe me, I am equally prepared to abide the issue."

No answer of any kind was returned to this invocation; nor did the least sound intimate the presence of the being to whom it was so solemnly addressed.

"I speak in vain," said Julian; "and perhaps I am but invoking that which is insensible of human feeling, or which takes a malign pleasure in human suffering."

There was a gentle and half-broken sigh from a corner of the apartment, which, answering to this exclamation, seemed to contradict the imputation which it conveyed.

Julian, naturally courageous, and familiarized by this time to his situation, raised himself in bed, and stretched out his arm, to repeat his adjuration, when the voice, as if alarmed at his action and energy, whispered, in a tone more hurried than that which it had hitherto used, "Be still—move not—or I am mute for ever!"

"It is then a mortal being who is present with me," was the natural inference of Julian, "and one who is probably afraid of being detected; I have then some power over my visiter, though I must be cautious how I use it.—If your intents are friendly," he proceeded, "there was never a time in which I lacked friends more, or would be more grateful for kindness. The fate of all who are dear to me is weighed in the balance, and with worlds would I buy the tidings of their safety."

"I have said my power is limited," replied the voice,

"*You* I may be able to preserve—the fate of your friends is beyond my control."

"Let me at least know it," said Julian; and be it as it may, I will not shun to share it."

"For whom would you inquire?" said the soft sweet voice, not without a tremulousness of accent, as if the question was put with diffident reluctance.

"My parents," said Julian, after a moment's hesitation; "how fare they?—What will be their fate?"

"They fare as the fort under which the enemy has dug a deadly mine. The work may have cost the labour of years, such were the impediments to the engineers; but Time brings opportunity upon its wings."

"And what will be the event?" said Peveril.

"Can I read the future," answered the voice, "save by comparison with the past?—Who has been hunted on these stern and unmitigable accusations, but has been at last brought to bay? Did high and noble birth, honoured age, and approved benevolence, save the unfortunate Lord Stafford? Did learning, capacity of intrigue, or high Court favour, redeem Coleman, although the confidential servant of the heir presumptive of the Crown of England?—Did subtilty and genius, and the exertions of a numerous sect, save Fenwick, or Whitbread, or any other of the accused priests?—Were Groves, Pickering, or the other humble wretches who have suffered, safe in their obscurity? There is no condition in life, no degree of talent, no form of principle, which affords protection against an accusation, which levels conditions, confounds charac-

ters, renders men's virtues their sins, and rates them as dangerous in proportion as they have influence, though attained in the noblest manner, and used for the best purposes. Call such a one but an accessory to the Plot—let him be mouthed in the evidence of Oates and Dugdale—and the blindest shall foresee the issue of their trial."

"Prophet of Evil!" said Julian, "my father has a shield invulnerable to protect him. He is innocent."

"Let him plead his innocence at the bar of Heaven," said the voice; "it will serve him little where Scroggs presides."

"Still I fear not," said Julian, counterfeiting more confidence than he really possessed; "my father's cause will be pleaded before twelve Englishmen."

"Better before twelve wild beasts," answered the Invisible, "than before Englishmen, influenced with party prejudice, passion, and the epidemic terror of an imaginary danger. They are bold in guilt in proportion to the number amongst whom the crime is divided."

"Ill-omened speaker," said Julian, "thine is indeed a voice fitted only to sound with the midnight-bell, and the screech-owl. Yet speak again. Tell me if thou canst"—(he would have said of Alice Bridgenorth, but the word would not leave his tongue)—"Tell me," he said, "If the noble house of Derby——"

"Let them keep their rock like the sea-fowl in the tempest; and it may so fall out," answered the voice, "that their rock may be a safe refuge. But there is blood on their ermine; and revenge has dogged them

for many a year, like a blood-hound that hath been distanced in the morning chase, but may yet grapple the quarry ere the sun shall set. At present, however, they are safe.—Am I now to speak farther on your own affairs, which involve little short of your life and honour? or are there yet any whose interests you prefer to your own?"

"There is," said Julian, "one from whom I was violently parted yesterday; if I knew but of her safety, I were little anxious for my own."

"One!" returned the voice, "only *one* from whom you were parted yesterday?"

"But in parting from whom," said Julian, "I felt separated from all happiness which the world can give me."

"You mean Alice Bridgenorth," said the Invisible, with some bitterness of accent; "but her you will never see more. Your own life and hers depend on your forgetting each other."

"I cannot purchase my own life at that price," replied Julian.

"Then DIE in your obstinacy," returned the Invisible; nor to all the entreaties which he used was he able to obtain another word in the course of that remarkable night.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SIXTH.

A short-houghed man, but full of pride.
ALLAN RAMSAY.

THE blood of Julian Peveril was so much fevered by the state in which his invisible visiter left him, that he was unable, for a length of time, to find repose. He swore to himself, that he would discover and expose the nocturnal demon which stole on his hours of rest, only to add gall to bitterness, and to pour poison into those wounds which already smarted so severely. There was nothing which his power extended to, that, in his rage, he did not threaten. He proposed a closer and a more rigorous survey of his cell, so that he might discover the mode by which his tormentor entered, were it as unnoticeable as an auger-hole. If his dili-

gence should prove unavailing, he determined to inform the jailers, to whom it could not be indifferent to know, that their prison was open to such intrusions. He proposed to himself, to discover from their looks, whether they were already privy to these visits; and if so, to denounce them to the magistrates, to the judges, to the House of Commons, was the least that his resentment proposed. Sleep surprised his worn-out frame in the midst of his projects of discovery and vengeance, and as frequently happens, the light of the ensuing day proved favourable to calmer resolutions.

He now reflected that he had no ground to consider the motives of his visiter as positively malevolent, although he had afforded him little encouragement to hope for assistance on the points he had most at heart. Towards himself, there had been expressed a decided feeling, both of sympathy and interest; if through means of these he could acquire his liberty, he might, when possessed of freedom, turn it to the benefit of those for whom he was more interested than for his own welfare. "I have behaved like a fool," he said; "I ought to have temporized with this singular being, learned the motives of its interference, and availed myself of its succour, provided I could do so without any dishonourable conditions. It would have been always time enough to reject such when they should have been proposed to me."

So saying, he was forming projects for regulating his intercourse with the stranger more prudently, in case their communication should be renewed, when his

meditations were interrupted by the peremptory summons of Sir Geoffrey Hudson, that he would, in his turn, be pleased to perform those domestic duties of their common habitation, which the dwarf had yesterday taken upon himself.

There was no resisting a request so reasonable, and Peveril accordingly rose and betook himself to the arrangement of their prison, while Sir Hudson, perched upon a stool from which his legs did not by half way reach the ground, sat in a posture of elegant languor, twangling upon an old broken-winded guitar, and singing songs in Spanish, Moorish, and Lingua Franca, most detestably out of tune. He failed not, at the conclusion of each ditty, to favour Julian with some account of what he had sung, either in the way of translation, or historical anecdote, or as the lay was connected with some peculiar part of his own eventful history, in the course of which the poor little man had chanced to have been taken by a Sallee rover, and carried captive into Morocco.

This part of his life Hudson used to make the era of many strange adventures; and, if he could himself be believed, he had made wild work among the affections of the Emperor's seraglio. But, although few were in a situation to cross-examine him on gallantries and intrigues of which the scene was so remote, the officers of the garrison of Tangier had a report current amongst them, that the only use to which the tyrannical Moors could convert a slave of such slender corporeal strength, was to employ him to lie a-bed all day

and hatch turkey's eggs. The least allusion to this rumour used to drive him well-nigh frantic, and the fatal termination of his duel with young Crofts, which began in wanton mirth, and ended in bloodshed, made men more coy than they had formerly been, of making the fiery little hero the subject of their raillery.

While Peveril did the drudgery of the apartment, the dwarf remained much at his ease, carolling in the manner we have described; but when he beheld Julian attempting the task of the cook, Sir Geoffrey Hudson sprung from the stool on which he sat *en Signor*, at the risk of breaking both his guitar and his neck, exclaiming, "That he would rather prepare breakfast every morning betwixt this and the day of judgment, than commit a task of such consequence to an inexperienced bungler like his companion."

The young man gladly resigned his task to the splenetic little Knight, and only smiled at his resentment when he added, that, to be but a mortal of middle stature, Julian was as stupid as a giant. Leaving the dwarf to prepare the meal after his own pleasure, Peveril employed himself in measuring the room with his eyes on every side, and in endeavouring to discover some private entrance, such as might admit his midnight visitant, and perhaps could be employed in case of need for effecting his own escape. The floor next engaged a scrutiny equally minute but more successful.

Close by his own pallet, and dropped in such a manner that he must have seen it sooner but for the hurry with which he obeyed the summons of the impa-

tient dwarf, lay a slip of paper, sealed, and directed with the initial letters J. P., which seemed to ascertain that it was addressed to himself. He took the opportunity of opening it while the soup was in the very moment of projection, and the full attention of his companion was occupied by what he, in common with wiser and taller men, considered as one of the principal occupations of life; so that, without incurring his observation, or awaking his curiosity, Julian had the opportunity to read as follows:—

"Rash and infatuated as you are, there is one who would forfeit much to stand betwixt you and your fate. You are to-morrow to be removed to the Tower, where your life cannot be assured for a single day; for, during the few hours you have been in London, you have provoked a resentment which is not easily slaked. There is but one chance for you,—renounce A. B.—think no more of her. If that be impossible, think of her but as one whom you can never see again. If your heart can resolve to give up an attachment which it should never have entertained, and which it would be madness to cherish longer, make your acquiescence in this condition known by putting on your hat a white band, or white feather, or knot of ribbon of the same colour, whichever you may most easily come by. A boat will, in that case, run, as if by accident, on board of that which is to convey you to the Tower. Do you in the confusion jump overboard, and swim to the Southwark side of the Thames. Friends will attend there to secure

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your escape, and you will find yourself with one who will rather lose character and life, than that a hair of your head should fall to the ground; but who, if you reject the warning, can only think of you as of the fool who perishes in his folly. May Heaven guide you to a sound judgment of your condition! So prays one who would be your friend, if you pleased,

"UNKNOWN."

The Tower!—it was a word of terror, even more so than a civil prison; for how many passages to death did that dark structure present! The severe executions which it had witnessed in preceding reigns, were not perhaps more numerous than the secret murders which had taken place within its walls; yet Peveril did not a moment hesitate on the part which he had to perform. "I will share my father's fate," he said; "I thought but of him when they brought me hither; I will think of nothing else when they convey me to yonder still more dreadful place of confinement; it is his, and it is but meet that it should be his son's.—And thou, Alice Bridgenorth, the day that I renounce thee, may I be held alike a traitor and a dastard!—Go, false adviser, and share the fate of seducers and heretical teachers!"

He could not help uttering this last expression aloud, as he threw the billet into the fire, with a vehemence which made the dwarf start with surprise. "What say you of burning heretics, young man?" he exclaimed; "by my faith, your zeal must be warmer than mine, if you talk on such a subject, when the here-

tics are the prevailing number. May I measure six feet without my shoes, but the heretics would have the best of it if we came to that work. Beware of such words."

"Too late to beware of words spoken and heard," said the turnkey, who, opening the door with unusual precautions to avoid noise, had stolen unperceived into the room; "however, Master Peveril has behaved like a gentleman, and I am no tale-bearer, on condition he will consider I have had trouble in his matters."

Julian had no alternative but to take the fellow's hint and administer a bribe, with which Master Clink was so well satisfied, that he exclaimed, "It went to his heart to take leave of such a kind-natured gentleman, and that he could have turned the key on him for twenty years with pleasure. But the best friends must part."

"I am to be removed, then?" said Julian.

"Ay, truly, master, the warrant is come from the Council."

"To convey me to the Tower,"

"Whew!" exclaimed the officer of the law—"who the devil told you that? But since you do know it, there is no harm to say ay. So make yourself ready to move immediately; and first hold out your dew-beaters till I take off the darbies."

"Is that usual?" said Peveril, stretching out his feet as the fellow directed, while his fetters were unlocked.

"Why, ay, master, these fetters belong to the keeper; they are not a-going to send them to the Lieu-

tenant, I trow. No, no, the warders must bring their own gear with them; they get none here, I promise them. Nevertheless, if your honour hath a fancy to go in fetters, as thinking it may move compassion of your case——"

"I have no intention to make my case seem worse than it is," said Julian, whilst at the same time, it crossed his mind that his anonymous correspondent must be well acquainted both with his own personal habits, since the letter proposed a plan of escape which could only be executed by a bold swimmer, and with the fashions of the prison, since it was foreseen that he would not be ironed on his passage to the Tower. The turnkey's next speech made him carry conjecture still farther.

"There is nothing in life I would not do for so brave a guest," said Clink; "I would nab one of my wife's ribbons for you, if your honour had the fancy to mount the white flag in your beaver."

"To what good purpose?" said Julian, shortly connecting, as was natural, the man's proposed civility with the advice given and the signal prescribed in the letter.

"Nay, to no good purpose I know of," said the turnkey; "only it is the fashion to seem white and harmless—a sort of token of not-guiltiness, as I may say, which folks desire to shew the world whether they be truly guilty or not; but I cannot say that guiltiness or not-guiltiness argufies much, saving they be words in the verdict."

"Strange," thought Peveril, although the man seemed to speak quite naturally, and without any double meaning, "strange that all should apparently combine to realize the plan of escape, could I but give my consent to it! And had I not better consent? Whoever does so much for me must wish me well, and a well-wisher would never enforce the unjust conditions on which I am required to consent to my liberation."

But this misgiving of his resolution was but for a moment. He speedily recollected, that whoever aided him in escaping, must be necessarily exposed to great risk, and had a right to name the stipulation on which he was willing to incur it. He also recollected that falsehood is equally base, whether expressed in words or in dumb show; and that he should lie as flatly by using the signal agreed upon in evidence of his renouncing Alice Bridgenorth, as he would in direct terms if he made such renunciation without the purpose of abiding by it.

"If you would oblige me," he said to the turnkey, "let me have a piece of black silk or crape for the purpose you mention."

"Of crape," said the fellow; "what should that signify? Why, the bien morts, who bing out to tour at you,* will think you a chimney-sweeper on May-day."

"It will shew my settled sorrow," said Julian, "as well as my determined resolution."

"As you will, sir," answered the fellow; "I'll pro-

* The smart girls, who turn out to look at you.

vide you with a black rag of some kind or other. So, now, let us be moving."

Julian intimated his readiness to attend him, and proceeded to bid farewell to his late companion, the stout Geoffrey Hudson. The parting was not without emotion on both sides, more particularly on that of the poor little man, who had taken a particular liking to the companion of whom he was now about to be deprived. "Fare ye well," he said, "my young friend," taking Julian's hand in both his own uplifted palms, in which action he somewhat resembled the attitude of a sailor pulling a rope overhead,—"Many in my situation would think himself wronged, as a soldier and servant of the king's chamber, in seeing you removed to a more honourable prison than that which I am limited unto. But, I thank God, I grudge you not the Tower, nor the Rocks of Scilly, nor even Carisbrooke Castle, though the latter was graced with the captivity of my blessed and martyred master. Go where you will, I wish you all the distinction of an honourable prison-house, and a safe and speedy deliverance in God's own time. For myself, my race is near a close, and that because I fall a martyr to the over-tenderness of my own heart. There is a circumstance, good Master Julian Peveril, which should have been yours, had Providence permitted our farther intimacy, but it fits not the present hour. Go, then, my friend, and bear witness in life and death, that Geoffrey Hudson scorns the insults and persecutions of fortune, as he would despise, and has often despised, the mischievous pranks of an overgrown schoolboy."

So saying, he turned away, and hid his face with his little handkerchief, while Julian felt towards him that tragi-comic sensation which makes us pity the object which excites it, not the less that we are somewhat inclined to laugh amid our sympathy. The jailer made him a signal, which Peveril obeyed, leaving the dwarf to disconsolate solitude.

As Julian followed the keeper through the various windings of this penal labyrinth, the man observed, that "he was a rum fellow, that little Sir Geoffrey, and, for gallantry, a perfect Cock of Bantam, for as old as he was. There was a certain gay wench," he said, "that had hooked him; but what she could make of him, save she carried him to Smithfield, and took money for him, as for a motion of puppets, it was," he said, "hard to gather."

Encouraged by this opening, Julian asked if his attendant knew why his prison was changed. "To teach you to become a King's post without commission," answered the fellow.

He stopped in his tattle as they approached that formidable central point, in which lay couched on his leathern elbow-chair, the fat commander of the fortress, stationed apparently for ever in the midst of his citadel, as the huge Boa is sometimes said to lie stretched as a guard upon the subterranean treasures of Eastern Rajahs. This overgrown man of authority eyed Julian wistfully and sullenly, as the miser the guinea which he must part with, or the hungry mastiff the food which is carried to another kennel. He growled to

himself as he turned the leaves of his ominous register, in order to make the necessary entry respecting the removal of his prisoner. "To the Tower—to the Tower —ay, ay, all must to the Tower—that's the fashion of it—free Britons to a military prison, as if we had neither bolts nor chains here!—I hope Parliament will have it up, this Towering work, that's all.—Well, the youngster will take no good by the change, and that is one comfort."

Having finished at once his official act of registration, and his soliloquy, he made a signal to his assistants to remove Julian, who was led along the same stern passages which he had traversed upon his entrance, to the gate of the prison, whence a coach, escorted by two officers of justice, conveyed him to the water-side.

A boat here waited him, with four warders of the Tower, to whose custody he was formally resigned by his late attendants. Clink, however, the turnkey, with whom he was more especially acquainted, did not take leave of him without furnishing him with the piece of black crape which he requested. Peveril fixed it on his hat amid the whispers of his new guardians. "The gentleman is in a hurry to go into mourning," said one; "mayhap he had better wait till he has cause."

"Perhaps others may wear mourning for him, ere he can mourn for any one," answered another of these functionaries.

Yet, notwithstanding the tenor of these whispers, their behaviour to their prisoner was more respectful than he had experienced from his former keepers, and

might be termed a sullen civility. The ordinary officers of the law were in general rude, as having to do with felons of every description; whereas these men were only employed with persons accused of state crimes—men who were from birth and circumstances usually entitled to expect, and able to reward, decent usage.

The change of keepers passed unnoticed by Julian, as did the gay and busy scene presented by the broad and beautiful river on which he was now launched. A hundred boats shot past them, bearing parties intent on business, or on pleasure. Julian only viewed them with the stern hope, that whoever had endeavoured to bribe him from his fidelity by the hope of freedom, might see, from the colour of the badge which he had assumed, how determined he was to resist the temptation presented to him.

It was about high water, and a stout wherry came up the river with sail and oar, so directly upon that in which Julian was embarked, that it seemed as if likely to run her aboard. "Get your carabines ready," cried the principal warder to his assistants. "What the devil can these scoundrels mean?"

But the crew in the other boat seemed to have perceived their error, for they suddenly altered their course, and struck off into the middle stream, while a torrent of mutual abuse was exchanged betwixt them and the boat whose course they had threatened to impede.

"The Unknown has kept his faith," said Julian to himself; "I too have kept mine."

It even seemed to him, as the boats neared each other, that he heard, from the other wherry, something like a stifled scream or groan; and when the momentary bustle was over, he asked the warder who sat next him, what boat that was.

"Men-of-war's-men on a frolic, I suppose," answered the warder. "I know no one else would be so impudent as run foul of the King's boat; for I am sure the fellow put the helm up on purpose. But mayhap you, sir, know more of the matter than I do."

This insinuation effectually prevented Julian, from putting farther questions, and he remained silent until the boat came under the dusky bastions of the Tower. The tide carried them up under a dark and lowering arch, closed at the upper end by the well-known Traitor's gate,* formed like a wicket of huge intersecting bars of wood, through which might be seen a dim and imperfect view of soldiers and warders upon duty, and of the steep ascending causeway which leads up from the river into the interior of the fortress. By this gate—and it is the well-known circumstance which assigned its name—those accused of state crimes were usually committed to the Tower. The Thames afforded a secret and silent mode of conveyance for transporting thither such whose fallen fortunes might move the commiseration, or whose popular qualities might excite the sympathy, of the public; and even where no cause for especial secrecy existed, the peace of the city was undisturbed by the tumult attending

* See Note to Fortunes of Nigel, vol. xxvii., p. 404.

the passage of the prisoner and his guards through the most frequented streets.

Yet this custom, however recommended by state policy, must have often struck chill upon the heart of the criminal, who thus, stolen, as it were, out of society, reached the place of his confinement, without encountering even one glance of compassion on the road; and as, from under the dusky arch, he landed on those flinty steps, worn by many a footstep anxious as his own, against which the tide lapped fitfully with small successive waves, and thence looked forward to the steep ascent into a Gothic state-prison, and backward to such part of the river as the low-brow'd vault suffered to become visible, he must often have felt that he was leaving day-light, hope, and life itself, behind him.

While the warder's challenge was made and answered, Peveril endeavoured to obtain information from his conductors where he was likely to be confined; but the answer was brief and general—"Where the Lieutenant should direct."

"Could he not be permitted to share the imprisonment of his father, Sir Geoffrey Peveril?" He forgot not, on this occasion, to add the surname of his house.

The warder, an old man of respectable appearance, stared, as if at the extravgance of the demand, and said bluntly, "It is impossible."

"At least," said Peveril, "shew me where my father is confined, that I may look upon the walls which separate us."

"Young gentleman," said the senior warder, shaking his gray head, "I am sorry for you; but asking questions will do you no service. In this place we know nothing of fathers and sons."

Yet chance seemed, in a few minutes afterwards, to offer Peveril that satisfaction which the rigour of his keepers was disposed to deny to him. As he was conveyed up the steep passage which leads under what is called the Wakefield Tower, a female voice, in a tone wherein grief and joy were indescribably mixed, exclaimed, "My son!—My dear son!"

Even those who guarded Julian seemed softened by a tone of such acute feeling. They slackened their pace. They almost paused to permit him to look up towards the casement from which the sounds of maternal agony proceeded; but the aperture was so narrow, and so closely grated, that nothing was visible save a white female hand, which grasped one of those rusty barricadoes, as if for supporting the person within, while another streamed a white handkerchief, and then let it fall. The casement was instantly deserted.

"Give it me," said Julian to the officer who lifted the handkerchief; "it is perhaps a mother's last gift."

The old warder lifted the napkin, and looked at it with the jealous minuteness of one who is accustomed to detect secret correspondence in the most trifling acts of intercourse.

"There may be writing on it with invisible ink," said one of his comrades.

"It is wetted, but I think it is only with tears,"

answered the senior. "I cannot keep it from the poor young gentleman."

"Ah, Master Coleby," said his comrade, in a gentle tone of reproach, "you would have been wearing a better coat than a yeoman's to-day, had it not been for your tender heart."

"It signifies little," said old Coleby, "while my heart is true to my King, what I feel in discharging my duty, or what coat keeps my old bosom from the cold weather."

Peveril, meanwhile, folded in his breast the token of his mother's affection which chance had favoured him with; and when placed in the small and solitary chamber which he was told to consider as his own during his residence in the Tower, he was soothed even to weeping by this trifling circumstance, which he could not help considering as an omen, that his unfortunate house was not entirely deserted by Providence.

But the thoughts and occurrences of a prison are too uniform for a narrative, and we must now convey our readers into a more bustling scene.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SEVENTH.

Henceforth 'tis done—Fortune and I are friends;
And I must live, for Buckingham commends.

POPE.

THE spacious mansion of the Duke of Buckingham, with the demesne belonging to it, originally bore the name of York House, and occupied a large portion of the ground adjacent to the Savoy.

This had been laid out by the munificence of his father, the favourite of Charles the First, in a most splendid manner, so as almost to rival Whitehall itself. But during the increasing rage for building new streets, and the creating of almost an additional town, in order to connect London and Westminster, this ground had become of very great value; and the second Duke of Buckingham, who was at once fond of scheming, and needy of money, had agreed to a plan laid before him by some adventurous architect, for converting the extensive grounds around his palace into those streets, lanes, and courts, which still perpetuate his name and titles; though those who live in Buckingham Street, Duke Street, Villiers' Street, or in Of-alley (for even that connecting particle is locally commemorated), probably think seldom of the memory of the witty,

eccentric, and licentious George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, whose titles are preserved in the names of their residence and its neighbourhood.

This building-plan the Duke had entered upon with all the eagerness which he usually attached to novelty. His gardens were destroyed—his pavilions levelled—his splendid stables demolished—the whole pomp of his suburban demesne laid waste, cumbered with ruins, and intersected with the foundations of new buildings and cellars, and the process of levelling different lines for the intended streets. But the undertaking, although it proved afterwards both lucrative and successful, met with a check at the outset, partly from want of the necessary funds, partly from the impatient and mercurial temper of the Duke which soon carried him off in pursuit of some more new object. So that, though much was demolished, very little, in comparison, was reared up in the stead, and nothing was completed. The principal part of the ducal mansion still remained uninjured; but the demesne in which it stood bore a strange analogy to the irregular mind of its noble owner. Here stood a beautiful group of exotic trees and shrubs, the remnant of the garden, amid yawning common-sewers and heaps of rubbish. In one place an old tower threatened to fall upon the spectator; and in another, he ran the risk of being swallowed up by a modern vault. Grandeur of conception could be discovered in the undertaking, but was almost everywhere marred by poverty or negligence of execution. In short, the whole place was the true emblem of an understanding

and talents run to waste, and become more dangerous than advantageous to society, by the want of steady principle and the improvidence of the possessor.

There were men who took a different view of the Duke's purpose in permitting his mansion to be thus surrounded, and his demesne occupied by modern buildings which were incomplete, and ancient which were but half demolished. They alleged, that, engaged as he was in so many mysteries of love and of politics, and having the character of the most daring and dangerous intriguer of his time, his Grace found it convenient to surround himself with this ruinous arena, into which officers of justice could not penetrate without some difficulty and hazard; and which might afford, upon occasion, a safe and secret shelter for such tools as were fit for desperate enterprises, and a private and unobserved mode of access to those whom he might have any special reason for receiving in secret.

Leaving Peveril in the Tower, we must once more convey our readers to the Levee of the Duke, who, on the morning of Julian's transference to that fortress, thus addressed his minister-in-chief, and principal attendant:—"I have been so pleased with your conduct in this matter, Jerningham, that if Old Nick were to arise in our presence, and offer me his best imp as a familiar in thy room, I would hold it but a poor compliment."

"A legion of imps," said Jerningham, bowing, "could not have been more busy than I in your Grace's service; but if your Grace will permit me to say so,

your whole plan was well-nigh marred by your not returning home till last night, or rather this morning."

"And why, I pray you, sage Master Jerningham," said his Grace, "should I have returned home an instant sooner than my pleasure and convenience served?"

"Nay, my Lord Duke," replied the attendant, "I know not; only, when you sent us word by Empson, in Chiffinch's apartment, to command us to make sure of the girl at any rate, and at all risks, you said you would be here so soon as you could get freed of the King."

"Freed of the King, you rascal! What sort of phrase is that?" demanded the Duke.

"It was Empson who used it, my lord, as coming from your Grace."

"There is much very fit for my Grace to say, that misbecomes such mouths as Empson's or yours to repeat," answered the Duke, haughtily, but instantly resumed his tone of familiarity, for his humour was as capricious as his pursuits. "But I know what thou wouldst have; first, your wisdom would know what became of me since thou hadst my commands at Chiffinch's; and next, your valour would fain sound another flourish of trumpets on thine own most artificial retreat, leaving thy comrade in the hands of the Philistines."

"May it please your Grace," said Jerningham, "I did but retreat for the preservation of the baggage."

"What! do you play at crambo with me?" said the

Duke. "I would have you know that the common parish fool should be whipt, were he to attempt to pass pun or quodlibet as a genuine jest, even amongst ticket-porters and hackney-chairmen."

"And yet I have heard your Grace indulge in the *jeu de mots*," answered the attendant.

"Sirrah Jerningham," answered the patron, "discard thy memory, or keep it under correction, else it will hamper thy rise in the world. Thou mayst perchance have seen me also have a fancy to play at trap-ball, or to kiss a serving-wench, or to guzzle ale and eat toasted cheese in a porterly whimsy; but is it fitting thou shouldst remember such follies? No more on't.—Hark you; how came the long lubberly fool, Jenkins, being a master of the noble science of defence, to suffer himself to be run through the body so simply by a rustic swain like this same Peveril?"

"Please your Grace, this same Corydon is no such novice. I saw the onset; and, except in one hand, I never saw a sword managed with such life, grace, and facility."

"Ay, indeed?" said the Duke, taking his own sheathed rapier in his hand, "I could not have thought that. I am somewhat rusted, and have need of breathing. Peveril is a name of note. As well go to the Barns-elms, or behind Montagu House, with him as with another. His father a rumoured plotter, too. The public would have noted it in me as becoming a zealous Protestant. Needful I do something to maintain my good name in the city, to atone for non-attendance on

prayer and preaching. But your Laertes is fast in the Fleet; and I suppose his blundering blockhead of an antagonist is dead or dying."

"Recovering, my lord, on the contrary," replied Jerningham; "the blade fortunately avoided his vitals."

"D—n his vitals!" answered the Duke. "Tell him to postpone his recovery, or I will put him to death in earnest."

"I will caution his surgeon," said Jerningham, "which will answer equally well."

"Do so; and tell him he had better be on his own deathbed as cure his patient till I send him notice. —That young fellow must be let loose again at no rate."

"There is little danger," said the attendant. "I hear some of the witnesses have got their net flung over him on account of some matters down in the north; and that he is to be translated to the Tower for that, and for some letters of the Countess of Derby, as rumour goes."

"To the Tower let him go, and get out as he can," replied the Duke; "and when you hear he is fast there, let the fencing fellow recover as fast as the surgeon and he can mutually settle it."

The Duke, having said this, took two or three turns in the apartment, and appeared to be in deep thought. His attendant waited the issue of his meditations with patience, being well aware that such moods, during which his mind was strongly directed in one point, were never of so long duration with his patron as to prove a severe burden to his own patience.

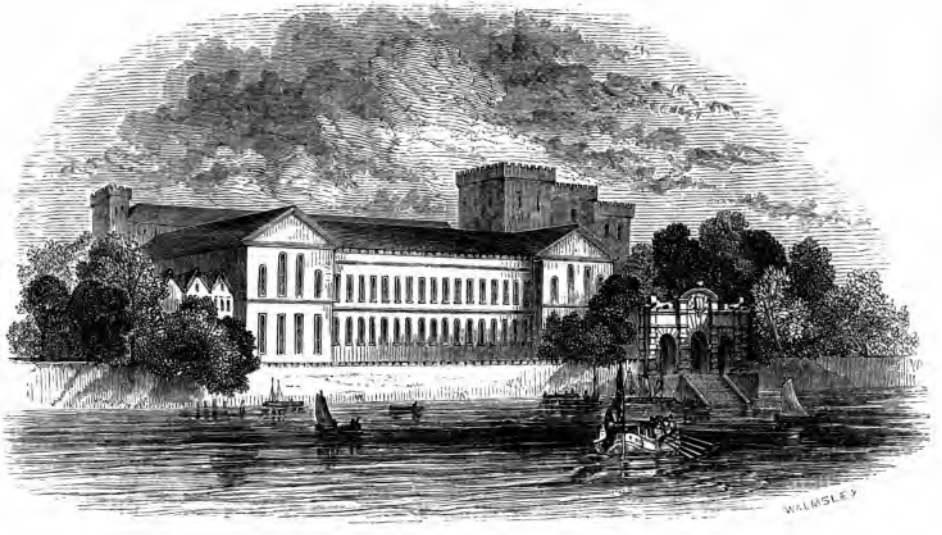
Accordingly, after the silence of seven or eight minutes, the Duke broke through it, taking from the toilette a large silk purse, which seemed full of gold. "Jerningham," he said, "thou art a faithful fellow, and it would be sin not to cherish thee. I beat the King at Mall on his bold defiance. The honour is enough for me; and thou, my boy, shalt have the winnings."

Jerningham pocketed the purse with due acknowledgments.

"Jerningham," his Grace continued, "I know you blame me for changing my plans too often; and on my soul I have heard you so learned on the subject, that I have become of your opinion, and have been vexed at myself for two or three hours together, for not sticking as constantly to one object, as doubtless I shall, when age (touching his forehead) shall make this same weathercock too rusty to turn with the changing breeze. But as yet, while I have spirit and action, let it whirl like the vane at the mast-head, which teaches the pilot how to steer his course; and when I shift mine, think I am bound to follow fortune, and not to control her."

"I can understand nothing from all this, please your Grace," replied Jerningham, "save that you have been pleased to change some purposed measures, and think that you have profited by doing so."

"You shall judge yourself," replied the Duke. "I have seen the Duchess of Portsmouth.—You start. It is true, by Heaven! I have seen her, and from sworn enemies we have become sworn friends. The treaty


WALMSLEY

between such high and mighty powers had some weighty articles; besides, I had a French negotiator to deal with; so that you will allow a few hours' absence was but a necessary interval to make up our matters of diplomacy."

"Your Grace astonishes me," said Jerningham. "Christian's plan of supplanting the great lady is then entirely abandoned? I thought you had but desired to have the fair successor here, in order to carry it on under your own management."

"I forget what I meant at the time," said the Duke; "unless that I was resolved she should not jilt me as she did the good-natured man of royalty; and so I am still determined, since you put me in mind of the fair Dowsabelle. But I had a contrite note from the Duchess while we were at the Mall. I went to see her, and found her a perfect Niobe.—On my soul, in spite of red eyes and swelled features, and dishevelled hair, there are, after all, Jerningham, some women, who do, as the poets say, look lovely in affliction. Out came the cause; and with such humility, such penitence, such throwing herself on my mercy (she the proudest devil, too, in the whole Court), that I must have had heart of steel to resist it all. In short, Chiffinch in a drunken fit had played the babbler, and let young Saville into our intrigue. Saville plays the rogue, and informs the Duchess by a messenger, who luckily came a little late into the market. She learned, too, being a very devil for intelligence, that there had been some jarring between the master and me about this new

Phillis; and that I was most likely to catch the bird,—as any one may see who looks on us both. It must have been Empson who fluted all this into her Grace's ear; and thinking she saw how her ladyship and I could hunt in couples, she entreats me to break Christian's scheme, and keep the wench out of the King's sight, especially if she were such a rare piece of perfection as fame has reported her."

"And your Grace has promised her your hand to uphold the influence which you have so often threatened to ruin?" said Jerningham.

"Ay, Jerningham; my turn was as much served when she seemed to own herself in my power, and cry me mercy.—And observe, it is all one to me by which ladder I climb into the King's cabinet. That of Portsmouth is ready fixed—better ascend by it than fling it down to put up another—I hate all unnecessary trouble."

"And Christian?" said Jerningham.

"May go to the devil for a self-conceited ass. One pleasure of this twist of intrigue is, to revenge me of that villain, who thought himself so essential, that, by Heaven! he forced himself on my privacy, and lectured me like a schoolboy. Hang the cold-blooded hypocritical vermin! If he mutters, I will have his nose slit as wide as Coventry's.*—Hark ye, is the Colonel come?"

"I expect him every moment, your Grace."

* The ill usage of Sir John Coventry by some of the Life Guardsmen in revenge of something said in Parliament concerning the King's theatrical amours, gave rise to what was called Coventry's Act, against cutting and maiming the person.

"Send him up when he arrives," said the Duke. ——"Why do you stand looking at me? What would you have?"

"Your Grace's direction respecting the young lady," said Jerningham.

"Odd zooks," said the Duke, "I had totally forgotten her.—Is she very tearful?—Exceedingly afflicted?"

"She does not take on so violently as I have seen some do," said Jerningham; "but, for a strong, firm, concentrated indignation, I have seen none to match her."

"Well, we will permit her to cool. I will not face the affliction of a second fair one immediately. I am tired of snivelling, and swelled eyes, and blubbered cheeks, for some time; and, moreover, must husband my powers of consolation. Begone, and send the Colonel."

"Will your Grace permit me one other question?" demanded his confidant.

"Ask what thou wilt, Jerningham, and then begone."

"Your Grace has determined to give up Christian," said the attendant. "May I ask what becomes of the kingdom of Man?"

"Forgotton, as I have a Christian soul!" said the Duke; "as much forgotten as if I had never nourished that scheme of royal ambition.—D—n it, we must knit up the ravelled skean of that intrigue.—Yet it is but a miserable rock, not worth the trouble I have been bestowing on it; and for a kingdom—it has a sound indeed; but, in reality, I might as well stick a cock-chicken's feather into my hat, and call it a plume.

Besides, now I think upon it, it would scarce be honourable to sweep that petty royalty out of Derby's possession. I won a thousand pieces of the young Earl when he was last here, and suffered him to hang about me at Court. I question if the whole revenue of his kingdom is worth twice as much. Easily I could win it of him, were he here, with less trouble than it would cost me to carry on these troublesome intrigues of Christian's."

"If I may be permitted to say so, please your Grace," answered Jerningham, "although your Grace is perhaps somewhat liable to change your mind, no man in England can afford better reasons for doing so."

"I think so myself, Jerningham," said the Duke; "and it may be it is one reason for my changing. One likes to vindicate his own conduct, and to find out fine reasons for doing what one has a mind to.—And now, once again, begone. Or, hark ye—hark ye—I shall need some loose gold. You may leave the purse I gave you; and I will give you an order for as much, and two years' interest, on old Jacob Doublefee."

"As your Grace pleases," said Jerningham, his whole stock of complaisance scarcely able to conceal his mortification at exchanging for a distant order, of a kind which of late had not been very regularly honoured, the sunny contents of the purse which had actually been in his pocket. Secretly but solemnly did he make a vow, that two years' interest alone should not be the compensation for this involuntary exchange in the form of his remuneration.

As the discontented dependent left the apartment, he met, at the head of the grand stair-case, Christian himself, who, exercising the freedom of an ancient friend of the house, was making his way, unannounced, to the Duke's dressing apartment. Jerningham, conjecturing that his visit at this crisis would be any thing but well-timed, or well-taken, endeavoured to avert his purpose, by asserting that the Duke was indisposed, and in his bed-chamber; and this he said so loud that his master might hear him, and, if he pleased, realize the apology which he offered in his name, by retreating into the bedroom as his last sanctuary, and drawing the bolt against intrusion.

But, far from adopting a stratagem to which he had had recourse on former occasions, in order to avoid those who came upon him, though at an appointed hour, and upon business of importance, Buckingham called, in a loud voice, from his dressing-apartment, commanding his chamberlain instantly to introduce his good friend Master Christian, and censuring him for hesitating for an instant to do so.

"Now," thought Jerningham within himself, "if Christian knew the Duke as well as I do, he would sooner stand the leap of a lion, like the London 'prentice bold, than venture on my master at this moment, who is even now in a humour nearly as dangerous as the animal."

He then ushered Christian into his master's presence, taking care to post himself within ear-shot of the door.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-EIGHTH.

"Speak not of niceness, when there's chance of wreck,"
The captain said, as ladies writhed their neck
To see the dying dolphin flap the deck:
"If we go down, on us these gentry sup;
We dine upon them, if we haul them up.
Wise men applaud us when we eat the eaters,
As the devil laughs when keen folks cheat the cheaters."

THE SEA VOYAGE.

THERE was nothing in the Duke's manner towards Christian which could have conveyed to that latter

personage, experienced as he was in the worst possible ways of the world, that Buckingham would, at that particular moment, rather have seen the devil than himself; unless it was that Buckingham's reception of him, being rather extraordinarily courteous towards so old an acquaintance, might have excited some degree of suspicion.

Having escaped with some difficulty from the vague region of general compliments, which bears the same relation to that of business that Milton informs us the *Limbo Patrum* has to the sensible and material earth, Christian asked his Grace of Buckingham, with the same blunt plainness with which he usually veiled a very deep and artificial character, whether he had lately seen Chiffinch or his helpmate?

"Neither of them lately," answered Buckingham. "Have not you waited on them yourself?—I thought you would have been more anxious about the great scheme."

"I have called once and again," said Christian, "but I can gain no access to the sight of that important couple. I begin to be afraid they are paltering with me."

"Which, by the welkin and its stars, you would not be slow in avenging, Master Christian. I know your puritanical principles on that point well," said the Duke. "Revenge may be well said to be sweet, when so many grave and wise men are ready to exchange for it all the sugar-plums which pleasures offer to the poor sinful people of the world, besides the reversion of those

which they talk of expecting in the way of *post obit.*"

"You may jest, my lord," said Christian, "but still——"

"But still you will be revenged on Chiffinch, and his little commodious companion. And yet the task may be difficult—Chiffinch has so many ways of obliging his master—his little woman is such a convenient pretty sort of a screen, and has such winning little ways of her own, that, in faith, in your case, I would not meddle with them. What is this refusing their door, man? We all do it to our best friends now and then, as well as to duns and dull company."

"If your Grace is in a humour of rambling thus wildly in your talk," said Christian, "you know my old faculty of patience—I can wait till it be your pleasure to talk more seriously."

"Seriously!" said his Grace—"Wherefore not?—I only wait to know what your serious business may be."

"In a word, my lord, from Chiffinch's refusal to see me, and some vain calls which I have made at your Grace's mansion, I am afraid either that our plan has miscarried, or that there is some intention to exclude me from the further conduct of the matter." Christian pronounced these words with considerable emphasis.

"That were folly as well as treachery," returned the Duke, "to exclude from the spoil the very engineer who conducted the attack. But hark ye, Christian—I am sorry to tell bad news without preparation; but as

you insist on knowing the worst, and are not ashamed to suspect your best friends, out it must come—Your niece left Chiffinch's house the morning before yesterday."

Christian staggered, as if he had received a severe blow; and the blood ran to his face in such a current of passion, that the Duke concluded he was struck with an apoplexy. But, exerting the extraordinary command which he could maintain under the most trying circumstances, he said, with a voice, the composure of which had an unnatural contrast with the alteration of his countenance, "Am I to conclude, that in leaving the protection of the roof in which I placed her, the girl has found shelter under that of your Grace?"

"Sir," replied Buckingham, gravely, "the supposition, does my gallantry more credit than it deserves."

"Oh, my Lord Duke," answered Christian, "I am not one whom you can impose on by this species of courtly jargon. I know of what your Grace is capable; and that to gratify the caprice of a moment, you would not hesitate to disappoint even the schemes at which you yourself have laboured most busily.—Suppose this jest played off. Take your laugh at those simple precautions by which I intended to protect your Grace's interest, as well as that of others. Let us know the extent of your frolic, and consider how far its consequences can be repaired."

"On my word, Christian," said the Duke laughing, "you are the most obliging of uncles and of guardians. Let your niece pass through as many adventures, as Boccaccio's bride of the King of Garba, you care not.

Pure or soiled, she will still make the footstool of your fortune."

An Indian proverb says, that the dart of contempt will even pierce through the shell of the tortoise; but this is more peculiarly the case when conscience tells the subject of the sarcasm that it is justly merited. Christian, stung with Buckingham's reproach, at once assumed a haughty and threatening mien, totally inconsistent with that in which sufferance seemed to be as much his badge as that of Shylock. "You are a foul-mouthed and most unworthy lord," he said; "and as such I will proclaim you, unless you make reparation for the injury you have done me."

"And what," said the Duke of Buckingham, "shall I proclaim *you*, that can give you the least title to notice from such as I am? What name shall I bestow on the little transaction which has given rise to such unexpected misunderstanding?"

Christian was silent, either from rage or from mental conviction.

Come, come, Christian," said the Duke, smiling, "we know too much of each other to make a quarrel safe. Hate each other we may—circumvent each other—it is the way of Courts—but proclaim!—a fico for the phrase."

"I used it not," said Christian, "till your Grace drove me to extremity. You know, my lord, I have fought both at home and abroad; and you should not rashly think that I will endure any indignity which blood can wipe away."

"On the contrary," said the Duke, with the same civil and sneering manner, "I can confidently assert, that the life of half a score of your friends would seem very light to you, Christian, if their existence interfered, I do not say with your character, as being a thing of much less consequence, but with any advantage which their existence might intercept. — Fie upon it, man, we have known each other long. I never thought you a coward; and am only glad to see I could strike a few sparkles of heat out of your cold and constant disposition. I will now, if you please, tell you at once the fate of the young lady, in which I pray you to believe that I am truly interested."

"I hear you, my Lord Duke," said Christian, "The curl of your upper-lip, and your eyebrow, does not escape me. Your Grace knows the French proverb, 'He laughs best who laughs last.' But I hear you."

"Thank Heaven you do," said Buckingham; "for your case requires haste, I promise you, and involves no laughing matter. Well, then, hear a simple truth, on which (if it became me to offer any pledge, for what I assert to be such) I could pledge life, fortune, and honour. It was the morning before last, when meeting with the King at Chiffinch's unexpectedly — in fact I had looked in to fool an hour away, and to learn how your scheme advanced — I saw a singular scene. Your niece terrified little Chiffinch — (the hen Chiffinch, I mean); bid the King defiance to his teeth, and walked out of the presence triumphantly, under the guardianship of a young fellow of little mark or likelihood,

excepting a tolerable personal presence, and the advantage of a most unconquerable impudence. Egad, I can hardly help laughing to think how the King and I were both baffled; for I will not deny, that I had tried to trifle for a moment with the fair Indamora. But, egad, the young fellow swooped her off from under our noses, like my own Drawcansir clearing off the banquet from the two Kings of Brentford. There was a dignity in the gallant's swaggering retreat which I must try to teach Mohun;* it will suit his part admirably."

"This is incomprehensible, my Lord Duke," said Christian, who by this time had recovered all his usual coolness; "you cannot expect me to believe this. Who dared be so bold as to carry off my niece in such a manner, and from so august a presence? And with whom, a stranger as he must have been, would she, wise and cautious as I know her, have consented to depart in such a manner?—My lord, I cannot believe this."

"One of your priests, my most devout Christian," replied the Duke, "would only answer, Die, infidel, in thine unbelief; but I am only a poor worldling sinner, and I will add what mite of information I can. The young fellow's name, as I am given to understand, is Julian, son of Sir Geoffrey, whom men call Peveril of the Peak."

"Peveril of the Devil, who hath his cavern there!" said Christian, warmly; "for I know that gallant, and believe him capable of any thing bold and desperate.

* Then a noted actor.

But how could he intrude himself into the royal presence? Either Hell aids him, or Heaven looks nearer into mortal dealings than I have yet believed. If so, may God forgive us, who deemed he thought not on us at all?"

"Amen, most christian Christian," replied the Duke. "I am glad to see thou hast yet some touch of grace that leads thee to augur so. But Empson, the hen Chiffinch, and half a dozen more, saw the swain's entrance and departure. Please examine these witnesses with your own wisdom, if you think your time may not be better employed in tracing the fugitives. I believe he gained entrance as one of some dancing or masking party. Rowley, you know, is accessible to all who will come forth to make him sport. So in stole this termagant tearing gallant, like Samson among the Philistines, to pull down our fine scheme about our ears."

"I believe you, my lord," said Christian; "I cannot but believe you; and I forgive you, since it is your nature, for making sport of what is ruin and destruction. But which way did they take?"

"To Derbyshire, I should presume, to seek her father," said the Duke. "She spoke of going into the paternal protection, instead of yours, Master Christian. Something had chanced at Chiffinch's, to give her cause to suspect that you had not altogether provided for his daughter in the manner which her father was likely to approve of."

"Now, Heaven be praised," said Christian, "she knows not her father is come to London! and they

must be gone down either to Martindale Castle, or to Moultrassie Hall; in either case they are in my power —I must follow them close. I will return instantly to Derbyshire—I am undone if she meet her father until these errors are amended. Adieu, my lord. I forgive the part which I fear your Grace must have had in baulking our enterprise—it is no time for mutual reproaches."

"You speak truth, Master Christian," said the Duke, "and I wish you all success. Can I help you with men or horses, or money?"

"I thank your Grace," said Christian, and hastily left the apartment.

The Duke watched his descending footsteps on the staircase, until they could be heard no longer, and then exclaimed to Jerningham, who entered, "*Victoria! victoria! magna est veritas et prœvalebit!*—Had I told the villain a word of a lie, he is so familiar with all the regions of falsehood—his whole life has been such an absolute imposture, that I had stood detected in an instant; but I told him truth, and that was the only means of deceiving him. Victoria! my dear Jerningham, I am prouder of cheating Christian, than I should have been of circumventing a minister of state."

"Your Grace holds his wisdom very high," said the attendant.

"His cunning, at least, I do, which, in Court affairs, often takes the weather-gage of wisdom,—as in Yarmouth Roads a herring-buss will baffle a frigate. He

shall not return to London if I can help it, until all these intrigues are over."

As his Grace spoke, the Colonel, after whom he had repeatedly made inquiry, was announced by a gentleman of his household. "He met not Christian, did he?" said the Duke hastily.

"No, my lord," returned the domestic, "the Colonel came by the old garden staircase."

"I judged as much," replied the Duke; "'tis an owl that will not take wing in daylight, when there is a thicket left to skulk under. Here he comes from threading lane, vault, and ruinous alley, very near as ominous a creature as the fowl of ill augury which he resembles."

The Colonel, to whom no other appellation seemed to be given, than that which belonged to his military station, now entered the apartment. He was tall, strongly built, and past the middle period of life, and his countenance, but for the heavy cloud which dwelt upon it, might have been pronounced a handsome one. While the Duke spoke to him, either from humility or some other cause, his large serious eye was cast down upon the ground; but he raised it when he answered, with a keen look of earnest observation. His dress was very plain, and more allied to that of the Puritans than of the Cavaliers of the time; a shadowy black hat like the Spanish sombrero, a large black mantle or cloak, and a long rapier, gave him something the air of a Castilione, to which his gravity and stiffness of demeanour added considerable strength.

"Well, Colonel," said the Duke, "we have been long strangers—how have matters gone with you?"

"As with other men of action in quiet times," answered the Colonel, "or as a good war caper* that lies high and dry in a muddy creak, till seams and planks are rent and riven."

"Well, Colonel," said the Duke, "I have used your valour before now, and I may again; so that I shall speedily see that the vessel is careened, and undergoes a thorough repair."

"I conjecture, then," said the Colonel, "that your Grace has some voyage in hand?"

"No, but there is one which I want to interrupt," replied the Duke.

"'Tis but another stave of the same tune.—Well, my lord, I listen," answered the stranger.

"Nay," said the Duke, "it is but a trifling matter after all.—You know Ned Christian?"

"Ay, surely, my lord," replied the Colonel, "we have been long known to each other."

"He is about to go down to Derbyshire to seek a certain niece of his, whom he will scarcely find there. Now, I trust to your tried friendship to interrupt his return to London. Go with him, or meet him, cajole him, or assail him, or do what thou wilt with him—only keep him from London for a fortnight at least, and then I care little how soon he comes."

"For by that time, I suppose," replied the Colonel,

* A privateer.

"any one may find the wench that thinks her worth the looking for."

"Thou mayst think her worth the looking for thyself, Colonel," rejoined the Duke; "I promise you she hath many a thousand stitched to her petticoat; such a wife would save thee from skeldering on the public."

"My lord, I sell my blood and my sword, but not my honour," answered the man, sullenly; "if I marry, my bed may be a poor, but it shall be an honest one."

"Then thy wife will be the only honest matter in thy possession, Colonel—at least since I have known you," replied the Duke.

"Why, truly, your Grace may speak your pleasure on that point. It is chiefly your business which I have done of late; and if it were less strictly honest than I could have wished, the employer was to blame as well as the agent. But for marrying a cast-off mistress, the man (saving your Grace, to whom I am bound) lives not who dares propose it to me."

The Duke laughed loudly. "Why, this is mine Ancient Pistol's vein," he replied.

——"Shall I Sir Pandarus of Troy become,
And by my side wear steel?—then Lucifer take all!"

"My breeding is too plain to understand ends of playhouse verse, my lord," said the Colonel, sullenly. "Has your Grace no other service to command me?"

"None—only I am told you have published a Narrative concerning the Plot."*

"What should ail me, my lord?" said the Colonel;

* Note C. Colonel Blood's Narrative.

"I hope I am a witness as competent as any that has yet appeared?"

"Truly, I think so to the full," said the Duke; "and it would have been hard, when so much profitable mischief was going, if so excellent a Protestant as yourself had not come in for a share."

"I came to take your Grace's commands, not to be the object of your wit," said the Colonel.

"Gallantly spoken, most resolute and most immaculate Colonel! As you are to be on full pay in my service for a month to come, I pray your acceptance of this purse, for contingents and equipments, and you shall have my instructions from time to time."

"They shall be punctually obeyed, my lord," said the Colonel; "I know the duty of a subaltern officer. I wish your Grace a good morning."

So saying, he pocketed the purse, without either affecting hesitation, or expressing gratitude, but merely as a part of a transaction in the regular way of business, and stalked from the apartment with the same sullen gravity which marked his entrance. "Now, there goes a scoundrel after my own heart," said the Duke; "a robber from his cradle, a murderer since he could hold a knife, a profound hypocrite in religion, and a worse and deeper hypocrite in honour,—would sell his soul to the devil to accomplish any villany, and would cut the throat of his brother, did he dare to give the villany he had so acted its right name.—Now why stand you amazed, good Master Jerningham, and look on me as you would on some monster of Ind, when you had

paid your shilling to see it, and were staring out your pennyworth with your eyes as round as a pair of spectacles? Wink, man, and save them, and then let thy tongue untie the mystery.'"

"On my word, my Lord Duke," answered Jerningham, "since I am compelled to speak, I can only say, that the longer I live with your Grace, I am the more at a loss to fathom your motives of action. Others lay plans, either to attain profit or pleasure by their execution; but your Grace's delight is to counteract your own schemes, when in the very act of performance; like a child—forgive me—that breaks its favourite toy, or a man who should set fire to the house he has half built."

"And why not, if he wanted to warm his hands at the blaze?" said the Duke.

"Ay, my lord," replied his dependent; "but what if, in doing so, he should burn his fingers?—My lord, it is one of your noblest qualities, that you will sometimes listen to the truth without taking offence; but were it otherwise, I could not, at this moment, help speaking out at every risk."

"Well, say on, I can bear it," said the Duke, throwing himself into an easy-chair, and using his toothpick with graceful indifference and equanimity; "I love to hear what such potsherds as thou art, think of the proceedings of us who are of the pure porcelain clay of the earth."

"In the name of Heaven, my lord, let me then ask you," said Jerningham, "what merit you claim, or what

advantage you expect, from having embroiled every thing in which you are concerned to a degree which equals the chaos of the blind old Roundhead's poem which your Grace is so fond of? To begin with the King. In spite of good-humour, he will be incensed at your repeated rivalry."

"His Majesty defied me to it."

"You have lost all hopes of the Isle, by quarrelling with Christian."

"I have ceased to care a farthing about it," replied the Duke.

"In Christian himself, whom you have insulted, and to whose family you intend dishonour, you have lost a sagacious, artful, and cool-headed instrument and adherent," said the monitor.

"Poor Jerningham!" answered the Duke; "Christian would say as much for thee, I doubt not, wert thou discarded to-morrow. It is the common error of such tools as you and he to think themselves indispensable. As to his family, what was never honourable cannot be dishonoured by any connection with my house."

"I say nothing of Chiffinch," said Jerningham, "offended as he will be when he learns why, and by whom, his scheme has been ruined, and the lady spirited away—He and his wife, I say nothing of them."

"You need not," said the Duke; "for were they even fit persons to speak to me about, the Duchess of Portsmouth has bargained for their disgrace."

"Then this bloodhound of a Colonel, as he calls himself, your Grace cannot even lay *him* on a quest

which is to do you service, but you must do him such indignity, at the same time, as he will not fail to remember, and be sure to fly at your throat should he ever have an opportunity of turning on you."

"I will take care he has none," said the Duke; "and yours, Jerningham, is a low-lived apprehension. Beat your spaniel heartily if you would have him under command. Ever let your agents see you know what they are, and prize them accordingly. A rogue, who must needs be treated as a man of honour, is apt to get above his work. Enough, therefore, of your advice and censure, Jerningham; we differ in every particular. Were we both engineers, you would spend your life in watching some old woman's wheel, which spins flax by the ounce; I must be in the midst of the most varied and counteracting machinery, regulating checks and counter-checks, balancing weights, proving springs and wheels, directing and controlling a hundred combined powers."

"And your fortune, in the meanwhile?" said Jerningham; "pardon this last hint, my lord."

"My fortune," said the Duke, "is too vast to be hurt by a petty wound; and I have, as thou knowest, a thousand salves in store for the scratches and scars which it sometimes receives in greasing my machinery."

"Your Grace does not mean Dr. Wilderhead's powder of projection?"

"Pshaw! he is a quacksalver and mountebank, and beggar."

"Or Solicitor Drowndland's plan for draining the fens?"

"He is a cheat,—*videlicet*, an attorney."

"Or the Laird of Lackpelf's sale of Highland woods?"

"He is a Scotsman," said the Duke,—"*videlicet*, both cheat and beggar."

"These streets here, upon the site of your noble mansion-house?" said Jerningham.

"The architect's a bite, and the plan's a bubble. I am sick of the sight of this rubbish, and I will soon replace our old alcoves, alleys, and flowerpots, by an Italian garden and a new palace."

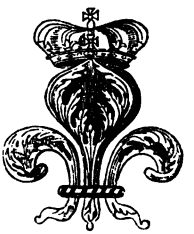
"That, my lord, would be to waste, not to improve your fortune," said his domestic.

"Clodpate, and muddy spirit that thou art, thou hast forgot the most hopeful scheme of all—the South Sea Fisheries—their stock is up 50 per cent already. Post down to the Alley, and tell old Manasses to buy £20,000 for me.—Forgive me, Plutus, I forgot to lay my sacrifice on thy shrine, and yet expected thy favours! —Fly post haste, Jerningham—for thy life, for thy life, for thy life!"*

With hands and eyes uplifted, Jerningham left the apartment; and the Duke, without thinking a moment

* Stock-jobbing, as it is called, that is, dealing in shares of monopolies, patents, and joint-stock companies of every description, was at least as common in Charles II.'s time as our own; and as the exercise of ingenuity in this way promised a road to wealth without the necessity of industry, it was then much pursued by dissolute courtiers.

further on old or new intrigues—on the friendship he had formed, or the enmity he had provoked—on the beauty whom he had carried off from her natural protectors, as well as from her lover—or on the monarch against whom he had placed himself in rivalship,—sat down to calculate chances with all the zeal of Demoivre, tired of the drudgery in half an hour, and refused to see the zealous agent whom he had employed in the city, because he was busily engaged in writing a new lampoon.



CHAPTER THE THIRTY-NINTH.

Ah! changeful head, and fickle heart!
PROGRESS OF DISCONTENT.

No event is more ordinary in narratives of this nature, than the abduction of the female on whose fate the interest is supposed to turn; but that of Alice Bridgenorth was thus far particular, that she was spirited away by the Duke of Buckingham, more in contradiction than in the rivalry of passion; and that, as he made his first addresses to her at Chiffinch's, rather in the spirit of rivalry to his Sovereign, than from any strong impression which her beauty had made on his affections, so he had formed the sudden plan of spiriting her away by means of his dependents, rather to perplex Christian, the King, Chiffinch, and all concerned, than because he had any particular desire for her society at his own mansion. Indeed, so far was this from being the case, that his Grace was rather surprised than delighted with the success of the enterprise which had made her an inmate there, although it is probable he might have

thrown himself into an uncontrollable passion, had he learned its miscarriage instead of its success.

Twenty-four hours had passed over since he had returned to his own roof, before, notwithstanding sundry hints from Jerningham, he could even determine on the exertion necessary to pay his fair captive a visit; and then it was with the internal reluctance of one who can only be stirred from indolence by novelty.

"I wonder what made me plague myself about this wench," said he, "and doom myself to encounter all the hysterical rhapsodies of a country Phillis, with her head stuffed with her grandmother's lessons about virtue and the Bible-book, when the finest and best-bred women in town may be had upon more easy terms. It is a pity one cannot mount the victor's car of triumph without having a victory to boast of; yet, faith, it is what most of our modern gallants do, though it would not become Buckingham.—Well, I must see her," he concluded, "though it were but to rid the house of her. The Portsmouth will not hear of her being set at liberty near Charles, so much is she afraid of a new fair seducing the old sinner from his allegiance. So how the girl is to be disposed of—for I shall have little fancy to keep her here, and she is too wealthy to be sent down to Cliefden as a housekeeper—is a matter to be thought on."

He then called for such a dress as might set off his natural good mien—a compliment which he considered as due to his own merit; for as to any thing farther, he went to pay his respects to his fair prisoner with almost

as little zeal in the cause, as a gallant to fight a duel in which he has no warmer interest than the maintenance of his reputation as a man of honour.

The set of apartments consecrated to the use of those favourites who occasionally made Buckingham's mansion their place of abode, and who were, so far as liberty was concerned, often required to observe the regulations of a convent, were separated from the rest of the Duke's extensive mansion. He lived in the age when what was called gallantry warranted the most atrocious actions of deceit and violence; as may be best illustrated by the catastrophe of an unfortunate actress, whose beauty attracted the attention of the last De Vere, Earl of Oxford. While her virtue defied his seductions, he ruined her under colour of a mock marriage, and was rewarded for a success which occasioned the death of his victim, by the general applause of the men of wit and gallantry who filled the drawing-room of Charles.

Buckingham had made provision in the interior of his ducal mansion for exploits of a similar nature; and the set of apartments which he now visited were alternately used to confine the reluctant, and to accommodate the willing.

Being now destined for the former purpose, the key was delivered to the Duke by a hooded and spectacled old lady, who sat reading a devout book in the outer hall which divided these apartments (usually called the Nunnery) from the rest of the house. This experienced dowager acted as mistress of the ceremonies on such

occasions, and was the trusty depositary of more intrigues than were known to any dozen of her worshipful calling besides.

"As sweet a linnet," she said, as she undid the outward door, "as ever sung in a cage."

"I was afraid she might have been more for moping than for singing, Dowlas," said the Duke.

"Till yesterday she was so, please your Grace," answered Dowlas; "or, to speak sooth, till early this morning, we heard of nothing but Lachrymæ. But the air of your noble Grace's house is favourable to singing-birds; and to-day matters have been a-much mended."

"'Tis sudden, dame," said the Duke; "and 'tis something strange, considering that I have never visited her, that the pretty trembler should have been so soon reconciled to her fate."

"Ah, your Grace has such magic, that it communicates itself to your very walls; as wholesome scripture says, Exodus, first and seventh, 'It cleaveth to the walls and the door-posts.'"

"You are too partial, Dame Dowlas," said the Duke of Buckingham.

"Not a word but truth," said the dame; "and I wish I may be an outcast from the fold of the lambs, but I think this damsel's very frame has changed since she was under your Grace's roof. Methinks she hath a lighter form, a finer step, a more displayed ankle—I cannot tell, but I think there is a change. But, lack-a-day, your Grace knows I am as old as I am trusty, and that my eyes wax something uncertain."

"Especially when you wash them with a cup of canary, Dame Dowlas," answered the Duke, who was aware that temperance was not amongst the cardinal virtues which were most familiar to the old lady's practice.

"Was it canary, your Grace said?—Was it indeed with canary, that your Grace should have supposed me to have washed my eyes?" said the offended matron. "I am sorry that your Grace should know me no better."

"I crave your pardon, dame," said the Duke, shaking aside, fastidiously, the grasp, which, in the earnestness of her exculpation, Madam Dowlas had clutched upon his sleeve. "I crave your pardon. Your nearer approach has convinced me of my erroneous imputation —I should have said nantz, not canary."

So saying, he walked forward into the inner apartments, which were fitted up with an air of voluptuous magnificence.

"The dame said true, however," said the proud deviser and proprietor of the splendid mansion—"A country Philis might well reconcile herself to such a prison as this, even without a skilful bird-fancier to touch a bird-call. But I wonder where she can be, this rural Phidele. Is it possible she can have retreated, like a despairing commandant, into her bedchamber, the very citadel of the place, without even an attempt to defend the out-works?"

As he made this reflection, he passed through an antechamber and little eating parlour, exquisitely fur-

nished, and hung with excellent paintings of the Venetian school.

Beyond these lay a withdrawing-room, fitted up in a style of still more studied elegance. The windows were darkened with painted glass, of such a deep and rich colour, as made the mid-day beams, which found their way into the apartment, imitate the rich colours of sunset; and, in the celebrated expression of the poet, "taught light to counterfeit a gloom."

Buckingham's feelings and taste had been too much, and too often, and too readily gratified, to permit him, in the general case, to be easily accessible, even to those pleasures which it had been the business of his life to pursue. The hackneyed voluptuary is like the jaded epicure, the mere listlessness of whose appetite becomes at length a sufficient penalty for having made it the principal object of his enjoyment and cultivation. Yet novelty has always some charms, and uncertainty has more.

The doubt how he was to be received—the change of mood which his prisoner was said to have evinced—the curiosity to know how such a creature as Alice Bridgenorth had been described, was likely to bear herself under the circumstances in which she was so unexpectedly placed, had upon Buckingham the effect of exciting unusual interest. On his own part, he had none of those feelings of anxiety with which a man, even of the most vulgar mind, comes to the presence of the female whom he wishes to please, far less the more refined sentiments of love, respect, desire, and awe,

with which the more refined lover approaches the beloved object. He had been, to use an expressive French phrase, too completely *blasé* even from his earliest youth, to permit him now to experience the animal eagerness of the one, far less the more sentimental pleasure of the other. It is no small aggravation of this jaded and uncomfortable state of mind, that the voluptuary cannot renounce the pursuits with which he is satiated, but must continue, for his character's sake, or from the mere force of habit, to take all the toil, fatigue, and danger of the chase, while he has so little real interest in the termination.

Buckingham, therefore, felt it due to his reputation as a successful hero of intrigue, to pay his addresses to Alice Bridgenorth with dissembled eagerness; and, as he opened the door of the inner apartment, he paused to consider, whether the tone of gallantry, or that of passion, was fittest to use on the occasion. This delay enabled him to hear a few notes of a lute, touched with exquisite skill, and accompanied by the still sweeter strains of a female voice, which, without executing any complete melody, seemed to sport itself in rivalship of the silver sound of the instrument.

"A creature so well educated," said the Duke, "with the sense she is said to possess, would, rustic as she is, laugh at the assumed rants of Oroondates. It is the vein of Dorimont—once, Buckingham, thine own—that must here do the feat, besides that the part is easier."

So thinking, he entered the room with that easy

grace which characterized the gay courtiers among whom he flourished, and approached the fair tenant, whom he found seated near a table covered with books and music, and having on her left hand the large half-open casement, dim with stained glass, admitting only a doubtful light into this lordly retiring-room, which, hung with the richest tapestry of the Gobelines, and ornamented with piles of china and splendid mirrors, seemed like a bower built for a prince to receive his bride.

The splendid dress of the inmate corresponded with the taste of the apartment which she occupied, and partook of the Oriental costume which the much admired Roxalana had then brought into fashion. A slender foot and ankle, which escaped from the wide trowser of richly ornamented and embroidered blue satin, was the only part of her person distinctly seen; the rest was enveloped, from head to foot, in a long veil of silver gauze, which, like a feathery and light mist on a beautiful landscape, suffered you to perceive that what it concealed was rarely lovely, yet induced the imagination even to enhance the charms it shaded. Such part of the dress as could be discovered was, like the veil and the trowsers, in the Oriental taste; a rich turban, and splendid caftan, were rather indicated than distinguished through the folds of the former. The whole attire argued at least coquetry on the part of a fair one, who must have expected, from her situation, a visiter of some pretension; and induced Buckingham to smile internally at Christian's account of the extreme simplicity and purity of his niece.

He approached the lady *en cavalier*, and addressed her with the air of being conscious, while he acknowledged his offences, that his condescending to do so formed a sufficient apology for them. "Fair Mistress Alice," he said, "I am sensible how deeply I ought to sue for pardon for the mistaken zeal of my servants, who, seeing you deserted and exposed without protection during an unlucky affray, took it upon them to bring you under the roof of one who would expose his life rather than suffer you to sustain a moment's anxiety. Was it my fault that those around me should have judged it necessary to interfere for your preservation; or that, aware of the interest I must take in you, they have detained you till I could myself, in personal attendance, receive your commands?"

"That attendance has not been speedily rendered, my lord," answered the lady. "I have been a prisoner for two days—neglected, and left to the charge of menials."

"How say you, lady?—Neglected!" exclaimed the Duke. "By Heaven, if the best in my household has failed in his duty, I will discard him on the instant!"

"I complain of no lack of courtesy from your servants, my lord," she replied; "but methinks it had been but complaisant in the Duke himself to explain to me earlier wherefore he has had the boldness to detain me as a state prisoner."

"And can the divine Alice doubt," said Buckingham, "that, had time and space, those cruel enemies to the

flight of passion, given permission, the instant in which you crossed your vassal's threshold had seen its devoted master at your feet, who hath thought, since he saw you, of nothing but the charms which that fatal morning placed before him at Chiffinch's?"

"I understand, then, my lord," said the lady, "that you have been absent, and have had no part in the restraint which has been exercised upon me?"

"Absent on the King's command, lady, and employed in the discharge of his duty," answered Buckingham, without hesitation. "What could I do?—The moment you left Chiffinch's, his Majesty commanded me to the saddle in such haste, that I had no time to change my satin buskins for riding-boots.* If my absence has occasioned you a moment of inconvenience, blame the inconsiderate zeal of those, who, seeing me depart from London, half-distracted at my separation from you, were willing to contribute their unmannered, though well-meant exertions, to preserve their master from despair, by retaining the fair Alice within his reach. To whom, indeed, could they have restored you? He whom you selected as your champion is in prison, or fled—your father absent from town—your uncle in the north. To Chiffinch's house you had expressed your well-founded aversion; and what fitter asylum

* This case is not without precedent. Among the jealousies, and fears expressed by the Long Parliament, they insisted much upon an agent for the King departing for the continent so abruptly, that he had not time to change his court dress—white buskins, to wit, and black silk pantaloons—for an equipment more suitable to travel with.

remained than that of your devoted slave, where you must ever reign a queen?"

"An imprisoned one," said the lady. "I desire not such royalty."

"Alas! how wilfully you misconstrue me!" said the Duke, kneeling on one knee; "and what right can you have to complain of a few hours' gentle restraint—you, who destine so many to hopeless captivity! Be merciful for once, and withdraw that envious veil; for the divinities are ever most cruel when they deliver their oracles from such clouded recesses. Suffer at least my rash hand——"

"I will save your Grace that unworthy trouble," said the lady, haughtily; and rising up, she flung back over her shoulders the veil which shrouded her, saying, at the same time, "Look on me, my Lord Duke, and see if these be indeed the charms which have made on your Grace an impression so powerful."

Buckingham did look; and the effect produced on him by surprise was so strong, that he rose hastily from his knee, and remained for a few seconds as if he had been petrified. The figure that stood before him had neither the height nor the rich shape of Alice Bridgenorth; and, though perfectly well made, was so slightly formed, as to seem almost infantine. Her dress was three or four short vests of embroideried satin, disposed one over the other, of different colours, or rather different shades, of similar colours; for strong contrast was carefully avoided. These opened in front, so as to show part of the throat and neck, partially obscured by an

inner covering of the finest lace; over the uppermost vest was worn a sort of mantle, or coat of rich fur. A small but magnificent turban was carelessly placed on her head, from under which flowed a profusion of coal-black tresses, which Cleopatra might have envied. The taste and splendour of the Eastern dress corresponded with the complexion of the lady's face, which was brunette, of a shade so dark as might almost have served an Indian.

Amidst a set of features, in which rapid and keen expression made amends for the want of regular beauty, the essential points of eyes as bright as diamonds, and teeth as white as pearls, did not escape the Duke of Buckingham, a professed connoisseur in female charms. In a word, the fanciful and singular female who thus unexpectedly produced herself before him, had one of those faces which are never seen without making an impression; which, when removed, are long after remembered; and for which, in our idleness, we are tempted to invent a hundred histories, that we may please our fancy by supposing the features under the influence of different kinds of emotion. Every one must have in recollection countenances of this kind, which, from a captivating and stimulating originality of expression, abide longer in the memory, and are more seductive to the imagination, than even regular beauty.

"My Lord Duke," said the lady, "it seems the lifting of my veil has done the work of magic upon your Grace. Alas, for the captive princess, whose nod

was to command a vassal so costly as your Grace! She runs, methinks, no slight chance of being turned out of doors, like a second Cinderella, to seek her fortune among lackeys and lightermen."

"I am astonished!" said the Duke. "That villain, Jerningham—I will have the scoundrel's blood!"

"Nay, never abuse Jerningham for the matter," said the Unknown; "but lament your own unhappy engagements. While you, my Lord Duke, were posting northward, in white satin buskins, to toil in the King's affairs, the right and lawful princess sat weeping in sables in the uncheered solitude to which your absence condemned her. Two days she was disconsolate in vain; on the third came an African enchantress to change the scene for her, and the person for your Grace. Methinks, my lord, this adventure will tell but ill, when some faithful squire shall recount or record the gallant adventures of the second Duke of Buckingham."

"Fairly bit and bantered to boot," said the Duke, —"the monkey has a turn for satire, too, by all that is *piquante*.—Hark ye, fair Princess, how dared you adventure on such a trick as you have been accomplice to?"

"Dare my lord!" answered the stranger; "put the question to others, not to one who fears nothing."

"By my faith, I believe so; for thy front is bronzed by nature.—Hark ye once more, mistress.—What is your name and condition?"

"My condition I have told you—I am a Mauritanian sorceress by profession, and my name is Zarah," replied the Eastern maiden.

"But methinks that face, shape, and eyes"—said the Duke,—"when didst thou pass for a dancing fairy?—Some such imp thou wert, not many days since."

"My sister you may have seen—my twin sister; but not me, my lord," answered Zarah.

"Indeed," said the Duke, "that duplicate of thine, if it was not thy very self, was possessed with a dumb spirit, as thou with a talking one. I am still in the mind that you are the same; and that Satan, always so powerful with your sex, had art enough, on our former meeting, to make thee hold thy tongue."

"Believe what you will of it, my lord," replied Zarah, "it cannot change the truth.—And now, my lord, I bid you farewell. Have you any commands to Mauritania?"

"Tarry a little, my Princess," said the Duke; "and remember, that you have voluntarily entered yourself as pledge for another; and are justly subjected to any penalty which it is my pleasure to exact. None must brave Buckingham with impunity."

"I am in no hurry to depart, if your Grace hath any commands for me."

"What! are you neither afraid of my resentment, nor of my love, fair Zarah?" said the Duke.

"Of neither, by this glove," answered the lady. "Your resentment must be a petty passion indeed, if it could stoop to such a helpless object as I am; and for your love—good lack! good lack!"

"And why good lack, with such a tone of contempt, lady?" said the Duke, piqued in spite of himself.

"Think you Buckingham cannot love, or has never been beloved in return?"

"He may have thought himself beloved," said the maiden; "but by what slight creatures!—things whose heads could be rendered giddy by a playhouse rant—whose brains were only filled with red-heeled shoes and satin buskins—and who run altogether mad on the argument of a George and a star."

"And are there no such frail fair ones in your climate, most scornful Princess?" said the Duke.

"There are," said the lady; "but men rate them as parrots and monkeys—things without either sense or soul, head or heart. The nearness we bear to the sun has purified, while it strengthens, our passions. The icicles of your frozen climate shall as soon hammer hot bars into ploughshares, as shall the foppery and folly of your pretended gallantry make an instant's impression on a breast like mine."

"You speak like one who knows what passion is," said the Duke. "Sit down, fair lady, and grieve not that I detain you. Who can consent to part with a tongue of so much melody, or an eye of such expressive eloquence!—You have known, then, what it is to love?"

"I know—no matter if by experience, or through the report of others—but I do know, that to love as I would love, would be to yield not an iota to avarice, not one inch to vanity, not to sacrifice the slightest feeling to interest or to ambition; but to give up ALL to fidelity of heart and reciprocal affection."

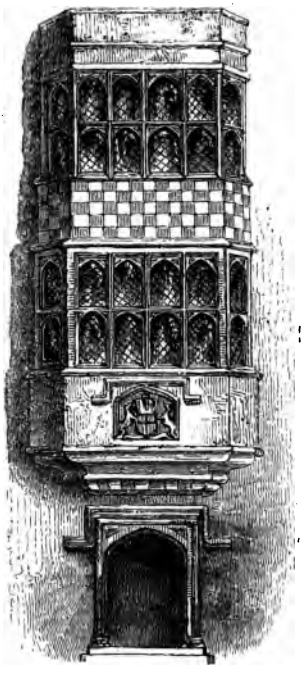
"And how many women, think you, are capable of feeling such disinterested passion?"

"More, by thousands, than there are men who merit it," answered Zarah. "Alas! how often do you see the female, pale, and wretched, and degraded, still following with patient constancy the footsteps of some predominating tyrant, and submitting to all his injustice with the endurance of a faithful and misused spaniel, which prizes a look from his master, though the surliest groom that ever disgraced humanity, more than all the pleasure which the world besides can furnish him? Think what such would be to one who merited and repaid her devotion."

"Perhaps the very reverse," said the Duke; "and for your simile, I can see little resemblance. I cannot charge my spaniel with any perfidy; but for my mistresses—to confess truth, I must always be in a cursed hurry if I would have the credit of changing them before they leave me."

"And they serve you but rightly, my lord," answered the lady; "for what are you?—Nay, frown not; for you must hear the truth for once. Nature has done its part, and made a fair outside, and courtly education hath added its share. You are noble, it is the accident of birth—handsome, it is the caprice of Nature—generous, because to give is more easy than to refuse—well-apparelled, it is to the credit of your tailor—well-natured in the main, because you have youth and health—brave, because to be otherwise were to be degraded—and witty, because you cannot help it."

The Duke darted a glance on one of the large mirrors. "Noble, and handsone, and court-like, generous, well-attired, good-humoured, brave and witty!—You allow me, more, madam, than I have the slightest pretension to, and surely enough to make my way, at some point at least, to female favour."



"I have neither allowed you a heart nor a head," said Zarah, calmly. —"Nay, never redden as if you would fly at me. I say not but nature may have given you both; but folly has confounded the one, and selfishness perverted the other. The man whom I call deserving the name, is one whose thoughts and exertions are for others, rather than himself, — whose high purpose is adopted on just principles, and never abandoned while heaven or earth affords means of accomplishing it. He is one who will neither seek an indirect advantage by a specious road, nor take an evil path to gain a real good purpose. Such a man were one for whom a woman's heart should

beat constant while he breathes, and break when he dies."

She spoke with so much energy that the water sparkled in her eyes, and her cheek coloured with the vehemence of her feelings.

"You speak," said the Duke, "as if you had yourself a heart which could pay the full tribute to the merit which you describe so warmly."

"And have I not?" said she, laying her hand on her bosom. "Here beats one that would bear me out in what I have said, whether in life or in death."

"Were it in my power," said the Duke, who began to get farther interested in his visiter than he could at first have thought possible—"Were it in my power to deserve such faithful attachment, methinks it should be my care to requite it."

"Your wealth, your titles, your reputation as a gallant—all you possess, were too little to merit such sincere affection."

"Come, fair lady," said the Duke, a good deal piqued, "do not be quite so disdainful. Bethink you, that if your love be as pure as coined gold, still a poor fellow like myself may offer you an equivalent in silver —The quantity of my affection must make up for its quality."

"But I am not carrying my affection to market, my lord; and therefore I need none of the base coin you offer in change for it."

"How do I know that, my fairest?" said the Duke. "This is the realm of Paphos—You have invaded it,

with what purpose you best know; but I think with none consistent with your present assumption of cruelty. Come, come—eyes that are so intelligent can laugh with delight, as well as gleam with scorn and anger. You are here a waif on Cupid's manor, and I must seize on you in name of the deity.

"Do not think of touching me, my lord," said the lady. "Approach me not, if you would hope to learn the purpose of my being here. Your Grace may suppose yourself a Solomon if you please; but I am no travelling princess, come from distant climes, either to flatter your pride, or wonder at your glory."

"A defiance, by Jupiter!" said the Duke.

"You mistake the signal," said the 'dark ladye;' "I came not here without taking sufficient precautions for my retreat."

"You mouth it bravely," said the Duke; "but never fortress so boasted its resources but the garrison had some thoughts of surrender. Thus I open the first parallel."

They had been hitherto divided from each other by a long narrow table, which, placed in the recess of the large casement we have mentioned, had formed a sort of barrier on the lady's side, against the adventurous gallant. The Duke went hastily to remove it as he spoke; but, attentive to all his motions, his visiter instantly darted through the half-open window.

Buckingham uttered a cry of horror and surprise, having no doubt, at first, that she had precipitated herself from a height of at least fourteen feet; for so

far the window was distant from the ground. But when he sprung to the spot, he perceived, to his astonishment, that she had effected her descent with equal agility and safety.

The outside of this stately mansion was decorated with a quantity of carving, in the mixed state, betwixt the Gothic and Grecian styles, which marks the age of Elizabeth and her successor; and though the feat seemed a surprising one, the projections of these ornaments were sufficient to afford footing to a creature so light and active, even in her hasty descent.

Inflamed alike by mortification and curiosity, Buckingham at first entertained some thought of following her by the same dangerous route, and had actually got upon the sill of the window for that purpose; and was contemplating what might be his next safe movement, when, from a neighbouring thicket of shrubs, amongst which his visiter had disappeared, he heard her chant a verse of a comic song, then much in fashion, concerning a despairing lover who had recourse to a precipice—

"But when he came near,
Beholding how steep
The sides did appear,
And the bottom how deep;
Though his suit was rejected,
He sadly reflected,
That a lover forsaken
A new love may get;
But a neck that's once broken
Can never be set."

The Duke could not help laughing, though much against his will, at the resemblance which the verses

bore to his own absurd situation, and stepping back into the apartment desisted from an attempt which might have proved dangerous as well as ridiculous. He called his attendants, and contented himself with watching the little thicket, unwilling to think that a female, who had thrown herself in a great measure into his way, meant absolutely to mortify him by a retreat.

That question was determined in an instant. A form, wrapped in a mantle, with a slouched hat and shadowy plume, issued from the bushes, and was lost in a moment amongst the ruins of ancient and of modern buildings, with which, as we have already stated, the demesne formerly termed York House was now encumbered in all directions.

The Duke's servants, who had obeyed his impatient summons, were hastily directed to search for this tantalizing siren in every direction. Their master, in the meantime, eager and vehement in every new pursuit, but especially when his vanity was piqued, encouraged their diligence by bribes, and threats, and commands. All was in vain.—They found nothing of the Mauritanian Princess, as she called herself, but the turban and the veil; both of which she had left in the thicket, together with her satin slippers; which articles, doubtless, she had thrown aside as she exchanged them for others less remarkable.

Finding all his search in vain, the Duke of Buckingham, after the example of spoiled children of all ages and stations, gave a loose to the frantic vehemence of passion; and fiercely he swore vengeance on his late

visiter, whom he termed by a thousand opprobrious epithets, of which the elegant phrase "Jilt" was most frequently repeated.

Even Jerningham, who knew the depths and shallows of his master's mood, and was bold to fathom them at almost every state of his passions, kept out of his way on the present occasion; and, cabineted with the pious old housekeeper, declared to her, over a bottle of ratifia, that, in his apprehension, if his Grace did not learn to put some control on his temper, chains, darkness, straw, and Bedlam, would be the final doom of the gifted and admired Duke of Buckingham.

CHAPTER THE FORTIETH.

———Contentions fierce,
Ardent, and dire, spring from no petty cause.
ALBION.

THE quarrels between man and wife are proverbial; but let not these honest folks think that connections of a less permanent nature are free from similar jars. The frolic of the Duke of Buckingham, and the subsequent escape of Alice Bridgenorth, had kindled fierce dissension in Chiffinch's family, when, on his arrival in town, he learned these two stunning events; "I tell you," he said to his obliging helpmate, who seemed but little moved by all that he could say on the subject, "that your d—d carelessness has ruined the work of years."

"I think it is the twentieth time you have said so," replied the dame; "and without such frequent assurance, I was quite ready to believe that a very trifling matter would overset any scheme of yours, however long thought of."

"How on earth could you have the folly to let the Duke into the house when you expected the King?" said the irritated courtier.

"Lord, Chiffinch," answered the lady, "ought not you to ask the porter, rather than me, that sort of

question?—I was putting on my cap to receive his Majesty."

"With the address of a madge-howlet," said Chiffinch, "and in the meanwhile you gave the cat the cream to keep."

"Indeed, Chiffinch," said the lady, "these jaunts to the country do render you excessively vulgar! there is a brutality about your very boots! nay, your muslin ruffles, being somewhat soiled, give to your knuckles a sort of rural rusticity, as I may call it."

"It were a good deed," muttered Chiffinch, "to make both boots and knuckles bang the folly and affectation out of thee." Then speaking aloud, he added, like a man who would fain break off an argument, by extorting from his adversary a confession that he has reason on his side, "I am sure, Kate, you must be sensible that our all depends on his Majesty's pleasure."

"Leave that to me," said she; "I know how to pleasure his Majesty better than you can teach me. Do you think his Majesty is booby enough to cry like a schoolboy because his sparrow has flown away? His Majesty has better taste. I am surprised at you, Chiffinch," she added, drawing herself up, "who were once thought to know the points of a fine woman, that you should have made such a roaring about this country wench. Why, she has not even the country quality of being plump as a barn-door fowl, but is more like a Dunstable lark, that one must crack bones and all if you would make a mouthful of it. What signifies whence she came, or where she goes? There will be

those behind that are much more worthy of his Majesty's condescending attention, even when the Duchess of Portsmouth takes the frumps."

"You mean your neighbour Mistress Nelly," said her worthy helpmate; "but, Kate, her date is out. Wit she has, let her keep herself warm with it in worse company, for the cant of a gang of strollers is not language for a prince's chamber."*

"It is no matter what I mean, or whom I mean," said Mrs. Chiffinch; "but I tell you, Tom Chiffinch, that you will find your master quite consoled for loss of the piece of prudish puritanism that you would needs saddle him with; as if the good man were not plagued enough with them in Parliament, but you must, forsooth, bring them into his very bedchamber."

"Well, Kate," said Chiffinch, "if a man were to speak all the sense of the seven wise masters, a woman would find nonsense enough to overwhelm him with; so I shall say no more, but that I would to Heaven I may find the King in no worse humour than you describe him. I am commanded to attend him down the river to the Tower to-day, where he is to make some survey

* In Evelyn's Memoirs is the following curious passage respecting Nell Gwyn, who is hinted at in the text:—"I walked with him [King Charles II.] through Saint James' Park to the garden, where I both saw and heard a very familiar discourse between . . . [*the King*] and Mrs. Nelly, as they called her, an intimate comedian, she looking out of her garden on a terrace at the top of the wall, and [*the King*] standing on the green walk under it. I was heartily sorry at this scene."—EVELYN'S *Memoirs*, vol. i., p. 413.

of arms and stores. They are clever fellows who contrive to keep Rowley from engaging in business, for, by my word, he has a turn for it."

"I warrant you," said Chiffinch the female, nodding, but rather to her own figure reflected from a mirror, than to her politic husband,—"I warrant you we will find means of occupying him that will sufficiently fill up his time."

"On my honour, Kate," said the male Chiffinch, "I find you strangely altered, and, to speak truth, grown most extremely opinionative. I shall be happy if you have good reason for your confidence."

The dame smiled superciliously, but deigned no other answer, unless this were one,—"I shall order a boat to go upon the Thames to-day with the royal party."

"Take care what you do, Kate; there are none dare presume so far but women of the first rank. Duchess of Bolton—of Buckingham—of——"

"Who cares for a list of names? why may not I be as forward as the greatest B. amongst your string of them?"

"Nay, faith, thou mayest match the greatest B. in Court already," answered Chiffinch; "so e'en take thy own course of it. But do not let Chaubert forget to get some collation ready, and a *souper au petit couvert*, in case it should be commanded for the evening."

"Ay, there your boasted knowledge of Court matters begins and ends.—Chiffinch, Chaubert, and Company; —dissolve that partnership, and you break Tom Chiffinch for a courtier."

"Amen, Kate," replied Chiffinch; "and let me tell you, it is as safe to rely on another person's fingers as on our own wit. But I must give orders for the water.—If you will take the pinnace, there are the cloth-of-gold cushions in the chapel may serve to cover the benches for the day. They are never wanted where they lie, so you may make free with them too."

Madam Chiffinch accordingly mingled with the flotilla which attended the King on his voyage down the Thames, amongst whom was the Queen, attended by some of the principal ladies of the Court. The little plump Cleopatra, dressed to as much advantage as her taste could devise, and seated upon her embroidered cushions like Venus in her shell, neglected nothing that effrontery and minauderie could perform to draw upon herself some portion of the King's observation; but Charles was not in the vein, and did not even pay her the slightest passing attention of any kind, until her boatmen, having ventured to approach nearer to the Queen's barge than etiquette permitted, received a peremptory order to back their oars, and fall out of the royal procession. Madam Chiffinch cried for spite, and transgressed Solomon's warning, by cursing the King in her heart; but had no better course than to return to Westminster, and direct Chaubert's preparations for the evening.

In the meantime, the royal barge paused at the Tower; and, accompanied by a laughing train of ladies and of courtiers, the gay Monarch made the echoes of

the old prison-towers ring with the unwonted sounds of mirth and revelry. As they ascended from the river side to the centre of the building, where the fine old keep of William the Conqueror, called the White Tower, predominates over the exterior defences, Heaven only knows how many gallant jests, good or bad, were run on the comparison of his Majesty's state-prison to that of Cupid, and what killing similes were drawn between the ladies' eyes and the guns of the fortress, which, spoken with a fashionable congée, and listened to with a smile from a fair lady, formed the fine conversation of the day.

This gay swarm of flutterers did not, however, attend close on the King's person, though they had accompanied him upon his party on the river. Charles, who often formed manly and sensible resolutions, though he was too easily diverted from them by indolence or pleasure, had some desire to make himself personally acquainted with the state of the military stores, arms, etc., of which the Tower was then, as now, the magazine; and, although he had brought with him the usual number of his courtiers, only three or four attended him on the scrutiny which he intended. Whilst, therefore, the rest of the train amused themselves as they might in other parts of the Tower, the King, accompanied by the Dukes of Buckingham, Ormond, and one or two others, walked through the well-known hall, in which is preserved the most splendid magazine of arms in the world, and which, though far from exhibiting its present extraordinary

state of perfection, was even then an arsenal worthy of the great nation to which it belonged.

The Duke of Ormond, well known for his services during the Great Civil War, was, as we have elsewhere noticed, at present rather on cold terms with his Sovereign, who nevertheless asked his advice on many occasions, and who required it on the present amongst others, when it was not a little feared, that the Parliament, in their zeal for the Protestant religion, might desire to take the magazines of arms and ammunition under their own exclusive orders. While Charles sadly hinted at such a termination of the popular jealousies of the period, and discussed with Ormond the means of resisting or evading it, Buckingham, falling a little behind, amused himself with ridiculing the antiquated appearance and embarrassed demeanour of the old warder who attended on the occasion, and who chanced to be the very same that escorted Julian Peveril to his present place of confinement. The Duke prosecuted his raillery with the greater activity, that he found the old man, though restrained by the place and presence, was rather upon the whole testy, and disposed to afford what sportsmen call *play* to his persecutor. The various pieces of ancient armour, with which the wall was covered, afforded the principal source of the Duke's wit, as he insisted upon knowing from the old man, who, he said, could best remember matters from the days of King Arthur downwards at the least, the history of the different warlike weapons, and anecdotes of the battles in which they had been wielded. The old man obvi-

ously suffered when he was obliged, by repeated questions, to tell the legends (often sufficiently absurd) which the tradition of the place had assigned to particular relics. Far from flourishing his partisan, and augmenting the emphasis of his voice, as was and is the prevailing fashion of these warlike Ciceroni, it was scarcely possible to extort from him a single word concerning those topics on which their information is usually overflowing.

"Do you know, my friend," said the Duke to him at last, "I begin to change my mind respecting you. I supposed you must have served as a Yeoman of the Guard since bluff King Henry's time, and expected to hear something from you about the Field of the Cloth of Gold,—and I thought of asking you the colour of Anne Bullen's breastknot, which cost the Pope three kingdoms; but I am afraid you are but a novice in such recollections of love and chivalry. Art sure thou didst not creep into thy warlike office from some dark shop in the Tower-Hamlets, and that thou hast not converted an unlawful measuring-yard into that glorious halberd? —I warrant, thou canst not even tell one whom this piece of antique panoply pertained to?"

The Duke pointed at random to a cuirass which hung amongst others, but was rather remarkable from being better cleansed.

"I should know that piece of iron," said the warder bluntly, yet with some change in his voice; "for I have known a man within side of it who would not have endured half the impertinence I have heard spoken to-day."

The tone of the old man, as well as the words, attracted the attention of Charles and the Duke of Ormond, who were only two steps before the speaker. They both stopped, and turned round; the former saying at the same time,—"How now, sirrah!—what answers are these?—What man do you speak of?"

"Of one who is none now," said the warder, "whatever he may have been."

"The old man surely speaks of himself," said the Duke of Ormond, closely examining the countenance of the warder, which he in vain endeavoured to turn away. "I am sure I remember these features—Are not you my old friend, Major Coleby?"

"I wish your Grace's memory had been less accurate," said the old man, colouring deeply, and fixing his eyes on the ground.

The king was greatly shocked.—"Good God," he said, "the gallant Major Coleby, who joined us with his four sons and a hundred and fifty men at Warrington!—And is this all we could do for an old Worcester friend?"

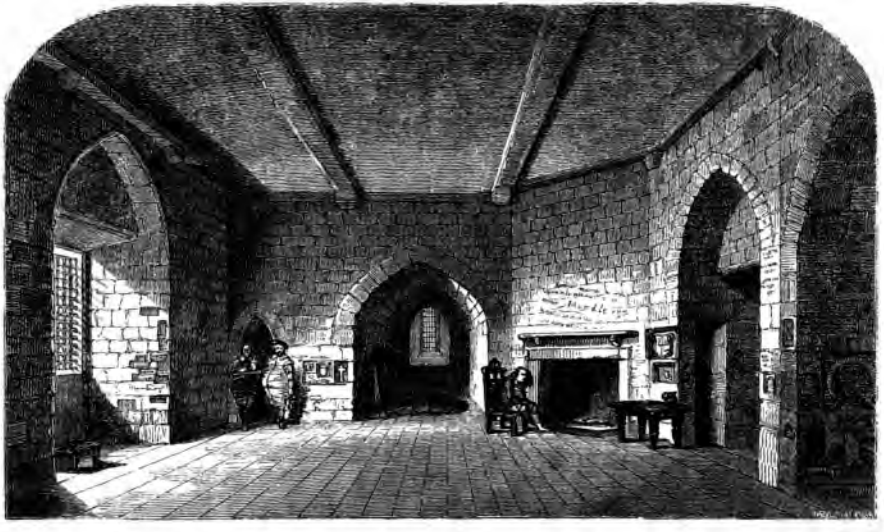
The tears rushed thick into the old man's eyes as he said, in broken accents, "Never mind me sire; I am well enough here—a worn-out soldier rusting among old armour. Where one old cavalier is better, there are twenty worse.—I am sorry your Majesty should know anything of it, since it grieves you."

With that kindness, which was a redeeming point of his character, Charles, while the old man was speaking, took the partisan from him with his own hand, and

put it into that of Buckingham, saying, "What Coleby's hand has borne, can disgrace neither yours nor mine,—and you owe him this atonement. Time has been with him, that, for less provocation, he would have laid it about your ears."

The Duke bowed deeply, but coloured with resentment, and took an immediate opportunity to place the weapon carelessly against a pile of arms. The King did not observe a contemptuous motion, which, perhaps, would not have pleased him, being at the moment occupied with the veteran, whom he exhorted to lean upon him, as he conveyed him to a seat, permitting no other person to assist him. "Rest there," he said, "my brave old friend; and Charles Stuart must be poor indeed if you wear that dress an hour longer.—You look very pale, my good Coleby, to have had so much colour a few minutes since. Be not vexed at what Buckingham says, no one minds his folly.—You look worse and worse. Come, come, you are too much hurried by this meeting. Sit still—do not rise—do not attempt to kneel. I command you to repose yourself till I have made the round of these apartments."

The old cavalier stooped his head in token of acquiescence in the command of his Sovereign, but he raised it not again. The tumultuous agitation of the moment had been too much for spirits which had been long in a state of depression, and health which was much decayed. When the King and his attendants, after half an hour's absence, returned to the spot where they had left the veteran, they found him dead, and already



cold, in the attitude of one who has fallen easily asleep. The King was dreadfully shocked; and it was with a low and faltering voice that he directed the body, in due time, to be honourably buried in the Chapel of the Tower.* He was then silent, until he attained the steps in front of the arsenal, where the party in attendance upon his person began to assemble at his approach, along with some other persons of respectable appearance, whom curiosity had attracted.

"This is dreadful," said the King. "We must find some means of relieving the distresses, and rewarding the fidelity of our suffering followers, or posterity will cry fie upon our memory."

"Your Majesty has had often such plans agitated in your Council," said Buckingham.

"True, George," said the King. "I can safely say it is not my fault. I have thought of it for years."

"It cannot be too well considered," said Buckingham; "besides, every year makes the task of relief easier."

"True," said the Duke of Ormond, "by diminishing the number of sufferers. Here is poor old Coleby will no longer be a burden to the Crown."

"You are too severe, my Lord of Ormond," said the King, "and should respect the feelings you trespass on.

* A story of this nature is current in the legends of the Tower. The affecting circumstances are, I believe, recorded in one of the little manuals which are put into the hands of visiters, but are not to be found in the later editions.

You cannot suppose that we would have permitted this poor man to hold such a situation, had we known of the circumstance?"

"For God's sake, then, sire," said the Duke of Ormond, "turn your eyes, which have just rested on the corpse of one old friend, upon the distresses of others. Here is the valiant old Sir Geoffrey Peveril of the Peak, who fought through the whole war, wherever blows were going, and was the last man, I believe, in England, who laid down his arms—Here is his son, of whom I have the highest accounts, as a gallant of spirit, accomplishments, and courage—Here is the unfortunate House of Derby—for pity's sake, interfere in behalf of these victims, whom the folds of this hydra-plot have entangled, in order to crush them to death—rebuke the fiends that are seeking to devour their lives, and disappoint the harpies that are gaping for their property. This very day seven-night the unfortunate family, father and son, are to be brought upon trial for crimes of which they are as guiltless, I boldly pronounce, as any who stand in this presence. For God's sake, sire, let us hope that, should the prejudices of the people condemn them, as it has done others, you will at last step in between the blood-hunters and their prey."

The King looked, as he really was, exceedingly perplexed.

Buckingham, between whom and Ormond there existed a constant and almost mortal quarrel, interfered to effect a diversion in Charles's favour. "Your Majesty's royal benevolence," he said, "needs never want

exercise, while the Duke of Ormond is near your person. He has his sleeve cut in the old and ample fashion, that he may always have store of ruined cavaliers stowed in it to produce at demand, rare old raw-boned boys, with Malmsey noses, bald heads, spindle shanks, and merciless histories of Edgehill and Naseby."

"My sleeve is, I dare say, of an antique cut," said Ormond, looking full at the Duke; "but I pin neither bravoes nor ruffians upon it, my Lord of Buckingham, as I see fastened to coats of the new mode."

"That is a little too sharp for our presence, my lord," said the King.

"Not if I make my words good," said Ormond.—"My Lord of Buckingham, will you name the man you spoke to as you left the boat?"

"I spoke to no one," said the Duke, hastily—"nay, I mistake, I remember a fellow whispered in my ear, that one, who I thought had left London, was still lingering in town. A person whom I had business with."

"Was yon the messenger?" said Ormond, singling out from the crowd who stood in the courtyard, a tall dark-looking man, muffled in a large cloak, wearing a broad shadowy black beaver hat, with a long sword of the Spanish fashion—the very Colonel, in short, whom Buckingham had despatched in quest of Christian, with the intention of detaining him in the country.

When Buckingham's eyes had followed the direction of Ormond's finger, he could not help blushing so deeply, as to attract the King's attention.*

* Note D. Colonel Blood.

"What new frolic is this, George?" he said. "Gentlemen, bring that fellow forward. On my life, a truculent-looking caitiff.—Hark ye, friend, who are you? If an honest man, Nature has forgot to label it upon your countenance.—Does none here know him?

> With every symptom of a knave complete,
> If he be honest he 's a devilish cheat."

"He is well known to many, sire," replied Ormond; "and that he walks in this area with his neck safe, and his limbs unshackled, is an instance, amongst many, that we live under the sway of the most merciful Prince of Europe."

"Oddsfish! who is the man, my Lord Duke?" said the King. "Your Grace talks mysteries—Buckingham blushes—and the rogue himself is dumb."

"That honest gentleman, please your Majesty," replied the Duke of Ormond, "whose modesty makes him mute, though it cannot make him blush, is the notorious Colonel Blood, as he calls himself, whose attempt to possess himself of your Majesty's royal crown took place at no very distant date, in this very Tower of London."

That exploit is not easily forgotten," said the King; "but that the fellow lives, shows your Grace's clemency as well as mine."

"I cannot deny that I was in his hands, sire," said Ormond, "and had certainly been murdered by him, had he chosen to take my life on the spot, instead of destining me—I thank him for the honour—to be hanged at Tyburn. I had certainly been sped, if he

had thought me worth knife or pistol or any thing short of the cord.—Look at him, sire! If the rascal dared, he would say at this moment, like Caliban in the play, 'Ho, ho, I would I had done it!'"

"Why, oddsfish!" answered the King, "he hath a villanous sneer, my lord, which seems to say as much; but, my Lord Duke, we have pardoned him, and so has your Grace."

"It would ill have become me," said the Duke of Ormond, "to have been severe in prosecuting an attempt on my poor life, when your Majesty was pleased to remit his more outrageous and insolent attempt upon your royal crown. But I must conceive it as a piece of supreme insolence on the part of this bloodthirsty bully, by whomsoever he may be now backed, to appear in the Tower, which was the theatre of one of his villanies, or before me, who was well-nigh the victim of another."

"It shall be amended in future," said the King.—"Hark ye, sirrah Blood, if you again presume to thrust yourself in the way you have done but now, I will have the hangman's knife and your knavish ears made acquainted."

Blood bowed, and, with a coolness of impudence which did his nerves great honour, he said he had only come to the Tower accidentally, to communicate with a particular friend on business of importance. "My Lord Duke of Buckingham," he said, "knew he had no other intentions."

"Get you gone, you scoundrelly cut-throat," said the Duke, as much impatient of Colonel Blood's claim of

acquaintance as a town-rake of the low and blackguard companions of his midnight rambles, when they accost him in daylight amidst better company; "if you dare to quote my name again, I will have you thrown into the Thames."

Blood, thus repulsed, turned round with the most insolent composure, and walked away down from the parade, all men looking at him, as at some strange and monstrous prodigy, so much was he renowned for daring and desperate villany. Some even followed him, to have a better survey of the notorious Colonel Blood, like the smaller tribe of birds which keep fluttering round an owl when he appears in the light of the sun. But as, in the latter case, these thoughtless flutterers are careful to keep out of reach of the beak and claws of the bird of Minerva, so none of those who followed and gazed on Blood as something ominous, cared to bandy looks with him, or to endure and return the lowering and deadly glances which he shot from time to time on those who pressed nearest to him. He stalked on in this manner, like a daunted, yet sullen wolf, afraid to stop, yet unwilling to fly, until he reached the Traitor's Gate, and getting on board a sculler which waited for him, he disappeared from their eyes.

Charles would fain have obliterated all recollection of his appearance, by the observation, "It were shame that such a reprobate scoundrel should be the subject of discord between two noblemen of distinction;" and he recommended to the Dukes of Buckingham and

Ormond to join hands, and forget a misunderstanding which rose on so unworthy a subject.

Buckingham answered carelessly, "That the Duke of Ormond's honoured white hairs were a sufficient apology for his making the first overtures to a reconciliation," and he held out his hand accordingly. But Ormond only bowed in return, and said, "The King had no cause to expect that the Court would be disturbed by his personal resentments, since time would not yield him back twenty years, nor the grave restore his gallant son Ossory. As to the ruffian who had intruded himself there, he was obliged to him, since, by shewing that his Majesty's clemency extended even to the very worst of criminals, he strengthened his hopes of obtaining the King's favour for such of his innocent friends as were now in prison, and in danger, from the odious charges brought against them on the score of the Popish Plot."

The King made no other answer to this insinuation than by directing that the company should embark for their return to Whitehall; and thus took leave of the officers of the Tower who were in attendance, with one of those well-turned compliments to their discharge of duty, which no man knew better how to express; and issued at the same time strict and anxious orders for protection and defence of the important fortress confided to them, and all which it contained.

Before he parted with Ormond on their arrival at Whitehall, he turned round to him, as one who has made up his resolution, and said, "Be satisfied,

my Lord Duke—our friends' case shall be looked to."

In the same evening the Attorney-General, and North, Lord Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas, had orders, with all secrecy, to meet his Majesty that evening on especial matters of state, at the apartments of Chiffinch, the centre of all affairs, whether of gallantry or business.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-FIRST.

Yet, Corah, thou shalt from oblivion pass;
Erect thyself, thou monumental brass,
High as the serpent of thy metal made,
While nations stand secure beneath thy shade!
ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.

THE morning which Charles had spent in visiting the Tower, had been very differently employed by those unhappy individuals, whom their bad fate, and the singular temper of the times, had made the innocent tenants of that state prison, and who had received official notice that they were to stand their trial in the Court of King's Bench at Westminster, on the seventh succeeding day. The stout old Cavalier at first only railed at the officer for spoiling his breakfast with the news, but evinced great feeling when he was told that Julian was to be put under the same indictment.

We intend to dwell only very generally on the nature of their trial, which corresponded, in the outline, with almost all those which took place during the prevalence of the Popish Plot. That is, one or two infamous and perjured evidences, whose profession of common informers had become frightfully lucrative, made oath to the prisoners' having expressed themselves

interested in the great confederacy of the Catholics. A number of others brought forward facts or suspicions, affecting the character of the parties as honest Protestants and good subjects; and betwixt the direct and presumptive evidence, enough was usually extracted for justifying, to a corrupted court and a perjured jury, the fatal verdict of Guilty.

The fury of the people had, however, now begun to pass away, exhausted even by its own violence. The English nation differ from all others, indeed even from those of the sister kingdoms, in being very easily sated with punishment, even when they suppose it most merited. Other nations are like the tamed tiger, which, when once its native appetite for slaughter is indulged in one instance, rushes on in promiscuous ravages. But the English public have always rather resembled what is told of the sleuth-dog, which, eager, fierce, and clamorous in pursuit of his prey, desists from it so soon as blood is sprinkled upon his path.

Men's minds were now beginning to cool—the character of the witnesses was more closely sifted—their testimonies did not in all cases tally—and a wholesome suspicion began to be entertained of men, who would never say they had made a full discovery of all they knew, but avowedly reserved some points of evidence to bear on future trials.

The King also, who had lain passive during the first burst of popular fury, was now beginning to bestir himself, which produced a marked effect on the conduct of the Crown Counsel, and even the Judges. Sir

George Wakeman had been acquitted in spite of Oates's direct testimony; and public attention was strongly excited concerning the event of the next trial; which chanced to be that of the Peverils, father and son, with whom, I know not from what concatenation, little Hudson the dwarf was placed at the bar of the Court of King's Bench.

It was a piteous sight to behold a father and son, who had been so long separated, meet under circumstances so melancholy; and many tears were shed, when the majestic old man—for such he was, though now broken with years—folded his son to his bosom, with a mixture of joy, affection, and a bitter anticipation of the event of the impending trial. There was a feeling in the Court that for a moment overcame every prejudice and party feeling. Many spectators shed tears; and there was even a low moaning, as of those who weep aloud.

Such as felt themselves sufficiently at ease to remark the conduct of poor little Geoffrey Hudson, who was scarcely observed amid the preponderating interest created by his companions in misfortune, could not but notice a strong degree of mortification on the part of that diminutive gentleman. He had soothed his great mind by the thoughts of playing the character which he was called on to sustain, in a manner which should be long remembered in that place; and on his entrance, had saluted the numerous spectators, as well as the Court, with a cavalier air, which he meant should express grace, high-breeding, perfect coolness, with a

noble disregard to the issue of their proceedings. But his little person was so obscured and jostled aside, on the meeting of the father and son, who had been brought in different boats from the Tower, and placed at the bar at the same moment, that his distress and his dignity were alike thrown into the background, and attracted neither sympathy nor admiration.

The dwarf's wisest way to attract attention, would have been to remain quiet, when so remarkable an exterior would certainly have received in its turn the share of public notice which he so eagerly coveted. But when did personal vanity listen to the suggestions of prudence?—Our impatient friend scrambled, with some difficulty, on the top of the bench intended for his seat; and there, "paining himself to stand a-tiptoe," like Chaucer's gallant Sir Chaunticlere, he challenged the notice of the audience as he stood bowing and claiming acquaintance of his namesake Sir Geoffrey the larger, with whose shoulders, notwithstanding his elevated situation, he was scarcely yet upon a level.

The taller Knight, whose mind was occupied in a very different manner, took no notice of these advances upon the dwarf's part, but sat down with the determination rather to die on the spot than evince any symptoms of weakness before Roundheads and Presbyterians; under which obnoxious epithets, being too old-fashioned to find out party designations of a newer date, he comprehended all persons concerned in his present trouble.

By Sir Geoffrey the larger's change of position, his face was thus brought on a level with that of Sir

Geoffrey the less, who had an opportunity of pulling him by the cloak. He of Martindale Castle, rather mechanically than consciously, turned his head towards the large wrinkled visage, which, struggling between an assumed air of easy importance, and an anxious desire to be noticed, was grimacing within a yard of him. But neither the singular physiognomy, the nods and smiles of greeting and recognition into which it was wreathed, nor the strange little form by which it was supported, had at that moment the power of exciting any recollections in the old Knight's mind; and having stared for a moment at the poor little man, his bulky namesake turned away his head without farther notice.

Julian Peveril, the dwarf's more recent acquaintance, had, even amid his own anxious feelings, room for sympathy with those of his little fellow-sufferer. As soon as he discovered that he was at the same terrible bar with himself, although he could not conceive how their causes came to be conjoined, he acknowledged him by a hearty shake of the hand, which the old man returned with affected dignity and real gratitude. "Worthy youth," he said, "thy presence is restorative, like the nepenthe of Homer, even in this syncope of our mutual fate. I am concerned to see that your father hath not the same alacrity of soul as that of ours, which are lodged within smaller compass; and that he hath forgotten an ancient comrade and fellow-soldier, who now stands beside him to perform, perhaps their last campaign."

Julian briefly replied, that his father had much to occupy him. But the little man—who, to do him justice, cared no more (in his own phrase) for imminent danger or death, than he did for the puncture of a flea's proboscis—did not so easily renounce the secret object of his ambition, which was to acquire the notice of the large and lofty Sir Geoffrey Peveril, who, being at least three inches taller than his son, was in so far possessed of that superior excellence, which the poor dwarf, in his secret soul, valued before all other distinctions, although, in his conversation, he was constantly depreciating it. "Good comrade and namesake," he proceeded, stretching out his hand, so as again to reach the elder Peveril's cloak, "I forgive your want of reminiscence, seeing it is long since I saw you at Naseby, fighting as if you had as many arms as the fabled Briareus."

The Knight of Martindale, who had again turned his head towards the little man, and had listened, as if endeavouring to make something out of his discourse, here interrupted him with a peevish "Pshaw!"

"Pshaw!" repeated Sir Geoffrey the less; "*Pshaw* is an expression of slight esteem,—nay, of contempt,—in all languages; and were this a befitting place——"

But the Judges had now taken their places, the criers called silence, and the stern voice of the Lord Chief-Justice (the notorious Scroggs) demanded what the officers meant by permitting the accused to communicate together in open court.

It may here be observed, that this celebrated personage was, upon the present occasion, at a great loss how

to proceed. A calm, dignified, judicial demeanour, was at no time the characteristic of his official conduct. He always ranted and roared either on the one side or the other; and of late he had been much unsettled which side to take, being totally incapable of anything resembling impartiality. At the first trials for the Plot, when the whole stream of popularity ran against the accused, no one had been so loud as Scroggs; to attempt to impeach the character of Oates or Bedlowe, or any other leading witnesses, he treated as a crime more heinous than it would have been to blaspheme the Gospel on which they had been sworn—it was a stifling of the Plot, or discrediting of the King's witnesses—a crime not greatly, if at all, short of high treason against the King himself.

But, of late, a new light had begun to glimmer upon the understanding of this interpreter of the laws. Sagacious in the signs of the times, he began to see that the tide was turning; and that Court favour at least, and probably popular opinion also, were likely, in a short time, to declare against the witnesses, and in favour of the accused.

The opinion which Scroggs had hitherto entertained of the high respect in which Shaftesbury, the patron of the Plot, was held by Charles, had been definitely shaken by a whisper from his brother North to the following effect: "His lordship has no more interest at Court than your footman."

This notice, from a sure hand, and received but that morning, had put the Judge to a sore dilemma; for,

PARLIAMENT HOUSES

however indifferent to actual consistency, he was most anxious to save appearances. He could not but recollect how violent he had been on former occasions in favour of these prosecutions; and being sensible at the same time that the credit of the witnesses, though shaken in the opinion of the more judicious, was, amongst the bulk of the people out of doors, as strong as ever, he had a difficult part to play. His conduct, therefore, during the whole trial, resembled the appearance of a vessel about to go upon another tack, when her sails are shivering in the wind, ere they have yet caught the impulse which is to send her forth in a new direction. In a word, he was so uncertain which side it was his interest to favour, that he might be said on that occasion to have come nearer a state of total impartiality than he was ever capable of attaining, whether before or afterwards. This was shewn by his bullying now the accused, and now the witnesses, like a mastiff too much irritated to lie still without baying, but uncertain whom he shall first bite.

The indictment was then read; and Sir Geoffrey Peveril heard, with some composure, the first part of it, which stated him to have placed his son in the household of the Countess of Derby, a recusant Papist, for the purpose of aiding the horrible and bloodthirsty Popish Plot, with having had arms and ammunition concealed in his house—and with receiving a blank commission from the Lord Stafford, who had suffered death on account of the Plot. But when the charge went on to state that he had communicated for the

same purpose with Geoffrey Hudson, sometimes called Sir Geoffrey Hudson, now or formerly in the domestic service of the Queen Dowager, he looked at his companion as if he suddenly recalled him to remembrance, and broke out impatiently, "These lies are too gross to require a moment's consideration. I might have had enough of intercourse, though in nothing but what was loyal and innocent, with my noble kinsman, the late Lord Stafford—I will call him so in spite of his misfortunes—and with my wife's relation, the Honourable Countess of Derby. But what likelihood can there be that I should have colleagued with a decrepit buffoon, with whom I never had an instant's communication, save once at an Easter feast, when I whistled a hornpipe, as he danced on a trencher to amuse the company?"

The rage of the poor dwarf brought tears in his eyes, while, with an affected laugh, he said, that instead of those juvenile and festive passages, Sir Geoffrey Peveril might have remembered his charging along with him at Wiggan-Lane.

"On my word," said Sir Geoffrey, after a moment's recollection, "I will do you justice, Master Hudson—I believe you were there—I think I heard you did good service. But you will allow you might have been near one, without his seeing you."

A sort of titter ran through the Court at the simplicity of the larger Sir Geoffrey's testimony, which the dwarf endeavoured to control by standing on his tiptoes, and looking fiercely around, as if to admonish the laughers that they indulged their mirth at their own

peril. But perceiving that this only excited farther scorn, he composed himself into a semblance of careless contempt, observing, with a smile, that no one feared the glance of a chained lion; a magnificent simile, which rather increased than diminished the mirth of those who heard it.

Against Julian Peveril there failed not to be charged the aggravated fact, that he had been bearer of letters between the Countess of Derby and other Papists and priests, engaged in the universal, treasonable conspiracy of the Catholics; and the attack of the house at Moultrassie-Hall,—with his skirmish with Chiffinch, and his assault, as it was termed, on the person of John Jenkins, servant to the Duke of Buckingham, were all narrated at length, as so many open and overt acts of treasonable import. To this charge Peveril contented himself with pleading—Not Guilty.

His little companion was not satisfied with so simple a plea; for when he heard it read, as a part of the charge applying to him, that he had received from an agent of the Plot a blank commission as Colonel of a regiment of grenadiers, he replied, in wrath and scorn, that if Goliath of Gath had come to him with such a proposal, and proffered him the command of the whole sons of Anak in a body, he should never have had occasion or opportunity to repeat the temptation to another. "I would have slain him," said the little man of loyalty, "even where he stood."

The charge was stated anew by the Counsel for the Crown; and forth came the notorious Doctor Oates,

rustling in the full silken canonicals of priesthood, for it was a time when he affected no small dignity of exterior decoration and deportment.

This singular man, who, aided by the obscure intrigues of the Catholics themselves, and the fortuitous circumstance of Godfrey's murder, had been able to cram down the public throat such a mass of absurdity as his evidence amounts to, had no other talent for imposture than an impudence which set conviction and shame alike at defiance. A man of sense or reflection, by trying to give his plot an appearance of more probability, would most likely have failed, as wise men often do in addressing the multitude, from not daring to calculate upon the prodigious extent of their credulity, especially where the figments presented to them involve the fearful and the terrible.

Oates was by nature choleric; and the credit he had acquired made him insolent and conceited. Even his exterior was portentous. A fleece of white periwig showed a most uncouth visage, of great length, having the mouth, as the organ by use of which he was to rise to eminence, placed in the very centre of the countenance, and exhibiting to the astonished spectator as much chin below as there was nose and brow above the aperture. His pronunciation, too, was after a conceited fashion of his own in which he accented the vowels in a manner altogether peculiar to himself.

This notorious personage, such as we have described him, stood forth on the present trial, and delivered his astonishing testimony concerning the existence of a

Catholic Plot for the subversion of the government and murder of the King, in the same general outline in which it may be found in every English history. But as the Doctor always had in reserve some special piece of evidence affecting those immediately on trial, he was pleased, on the present occasion, deeply to inculpate the Countess of Derby. "He had seen," as he said, "that honourable lady when he was at the Jesuits' College at Saint Omer's. She had sent for him to an inn, or *auberge*, as it was there termed—the sign of the Golden Lamb; and had ordered him to breakfast in the same room with her ladyship; and afterwards told him, that, knowing he was trusted by the Fathers of the Society, she was determined that he should have a share of her secrets also; and therewithal, that she drew from her bosom a broad sharp-pointed knife, such as butchers kill sheep with, and demanded of him what he thought of it for *the purpose;* and when he, the witness, said for what purpose, she rapt him on the fingers with her fan, called him a dull fellow, and said it was designed to kill the King with."

Here Sir Geoffrey Peveril could no longer refrain his indignation and surprise. "Mercy of Heaven!" he said, "did ever one hear of ladies of quality carrying butchering knives about them, and telling every scurvy companion she meant to kill the King with them?—Gentlemen of the Jury, do but think if this is reasonable—though, if the villain could prove by any honest evidence, that my lady of Derby ever let such a scum as himself come to speech of her, I would believe all he can say."

"Sir Geoffrey," said the Judge, "rest you quiet—You must not fly out—passion helps you not here—the Doctor must be suffered to proceed."

Doctor Oates went on to state, how the lady complained of the wrongs the House of Derby had sustained from the King, and the oppression of her religion, and boasted of the schemes of the Jesuits and seminary priests; and how they would be furthered by her noble kinsman of the House of Stanley. He finally averred that both the Countess and the Fathers of the seminary abroad, founded much upon the talents and courage of Sir Geoffrey Peveril and his son—the latter of whom was a member of her family. Of Hudson, he only recollected of having heard one of the Fathers say, that although but a dwarf in stature, he would prove a giant in the cause of the Church."

When he had ended his evidence, there was a pause, until the Judge, as if the thought had suddenly occurred to him, demanded of Dr. Oates, whether he had ever mentioned the name of the Countess of Derby, in any of the previous informations which he had lodged before the Privy Council, and elsewhere, upon this affair.

Oates seemed rather surprised at the question, and coloured with anger, as he answered, in his peculiar mode of pronunciation, "Whoy, no, maay laard."

"And pray, Doctor," said the Judge, "how came so great a revealer of mysteries as you have lately proved, to have suffered so material a circumstance as the accession of this powerful family to the Plot to have remained undiscovered?"

"Maay laard," said Oates, with much effrontery, "aye do not come here to have my evidence questioned as touching the Plaat."

"I do not question your evidence, Doctor," said Scroggs, for the time was not arrived that he dared treat him roughly; "nor do I doubt the existence of the *Plaat*, since it is your pleasure to swear to it. I would only have you, for your own sake, and the satisfaction of all good Protestants, to explain why you have kept back such a weighty point of information from the King and country."

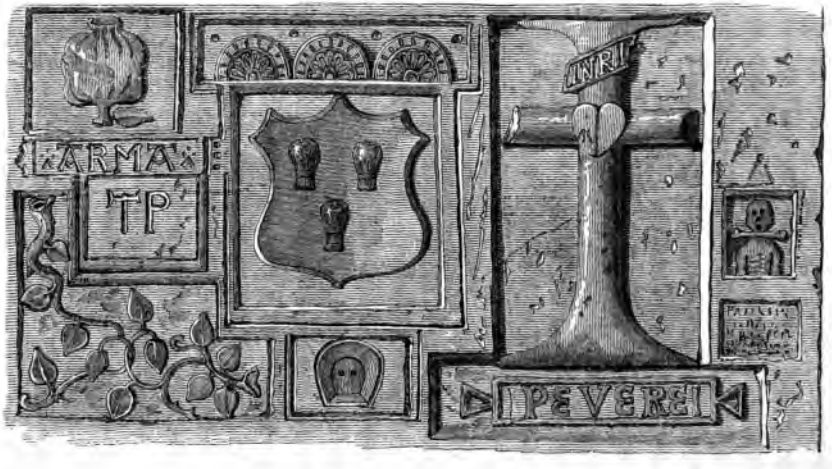
"Maay laard," said Oates, "I will tell you a pretty fable."

"I hope," answered the Judge, "it may be the first and last which you shall tell in this place."

"Maay laard," continued Oates, "there was once a faux, who having to carry a goose over a frazen river, and being afraid the aice would not bear him and his booty, did caarry aaver a staane, my laard, in the first instance, to prove the strength of the aice."

"So your former evidence was but the stone, and now, for the first time, you have brought us the goose?" said Sir William Scroggs; "to tell us this, Doctor, is to make geese of the Court and Jury."

"I desoire your laardship's honest construction," said Oates, who saw the current changing against him, but was determined to pay the score with effrontery. "All men knaw at what coast and praice I have given my evidence, which has been always, under Gaad, the means of awakening this poor naation to the dangerous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state in which it staunds. Many here knaw that I have been obliged to faartify my ladging at Whitehall against the bloody Papists. It was not to be thought that I should have brought all the story out at aance. I think your wisdom would have advised me otherwise."*

"Nay, Doctor," said the Judge, "it is not for me to direct you in this affair; and it is for the Jury to believe you or not; and as for myself, I sit here to do justice to both—the Jury have heard your answer to my question."

Doctor Oates retired from the witness-box reddening like a turkey-cock, as one totally unused to have such accounts questioned as he chose to lay before the courts of justice; and there was, perhaps for the first time, amongst the counsel and solicitors, as well as the templars and students of law there present, a murmur, distinct and audible, unfavourable to the character of the great father of the Popish Plot.

Everett and Dangerfield, with whom the reader is already acquainted, were then called in succession to sustain the accusation. They were subordinate informers—a sort of under-spur-leathers, as the cant term went—who followed the path of Oates, with all deference to his superior genius and invention, and made their own fictions chime in and harmonize with his, as

* It was on such terms that Dr. Oates was pleased to claim the extraordinary privilege of dealing out the information which he chose to communicate to a court of justice. The only sense in which his story of the fox, stone, and goose, could be applicable, is by supposing, that he was determined to ascertain the extent of his countrymen's credulity before supplying it with a full meal.

well as their talents could devise. But as their evidence had at no time received the full credence into which the impudence of Oates had cajoled the public, so they now began to fall into discredit rather more hastily than their prototype, as the superadded turrets of an ill-constructed building are naturally the first to give way.

It was in vain that Everett, with the precision of a hypocrite, and Dangerfield, with the audacity of a bully, narrated, with added circumstances of suspicion and criminality, their meeting with Julian Peveril in Liverpool, and again at Martindale Castle. It was in vain they described the arms and accoutrements which they pretended to have discovered in old Sir Geoffrey's possession; and that they gave a most dreadful account of the escape of the younger Peveril from Moultrassie-Hall, by means of an armed force.

The Jury listened coldly, and it was visible that they were but little moved by the accusation; especially as the Judge, always professing his belief in the Plot, and his zeal for the Protestant religion, was ever and anon reminding them that presumptions were no proofs —that hearsay was no evidence—that those who made a trade of discovery were likely to aid their researches by invention—and that without doubting the guilt of the unfortunate persons at the bar, he would gladly hear some evidence brought against them of a different nature. "Here we are told of a riot, and an escape achieved by the younger Peveril, at the house of a grave and worthy magistrate, known, I think, to most of us. Why, Master Attorney, bring ye not Master Bridgenorth

himself to prove the fact, or all his household if it be necessary?—A rising in arms is an affair over public to be left on the hearsay tale of these two men—though Heaven forbid that I should suppose they speak one word more than they believe! They are the witnesses for the King—and what is equally dear to us, the Protestant religion—and witnesses against a most foul and heathenish Plot. On the other hand, here is a worshipful old knight, for such I must suppose him to be, since he has bled often in battle for the King,—such, I must say, I suppose him to be, until he is proved otherwise. And here is his son, a hopeful young gentleman —we must see that they have right, Master Attorney."

"Unquestionably, my lord," answered the Attorney. "God forbid else! But we will make out these matters against these unhappy gentlemen in a manner more close, if your Lordship will permit us to bring in our evidence."

"Go on Master Attorney," said the Judge, throwing himself back in his seat. "Heaven forbid I hinder proving the King's accusation! I only say, what you know as well as I, that *de non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio.*"

"We shall then call Master Bridgenorth, as your Lordship advises, who I think is in waiting."

"No!" answered a voice from the crowd, apparently that of a female; "he is too wise and too honest to be here."

The voice was distinct as that of Lady Fairfax, when she expressed herself to a similar effect on the trial of

Charles the First; but the researches which were made on the present occasion to discover the speaker were unsuccessful.

After the slight confusion occasioned by this circumstance was abated, the Attorney, who had been talking aside with the conductors of the prosecution, said, "Whoever favoured us with that information, my lord, had good reason for what they said. Master Bridgenorth has become, I am told, suddenly invisible since this morning."

"Look you there now, Master Attorney," said the Judge—"This comes of not keeping the crown witnesses together and in readiness—I am sure I cannot help the consequences."

"Nor I either, my lord," said the Attorney, pettishly. "I could have proved by this worshipful gentleman, Master Justice Bridgenorth, the ancient friendship betwixt this party, Sir Geoffrey Peveril, and the Countess of Derby, of whose doings and intentions Doctor Oates has given such a deliberate evidence. I could have proved his having sheltered her in his Castle against a process of law, and rescued her, by force of arms, from this very Justice Bridgenorth, not without actual violence. Moreover, I could have proved against young Peveril the whole affray charged upon him by the same worshipful evidence."

Here the Judge stuck his thumbs into his girdle, which was a favourite attitude of his on such occasions, and exclaimed, "Pshaw, pshaw, Master Attorney!—Tell me not that you *could* have proved this, and you

could have proved that, or that, or this—Prove what you will, but let it be through the mouths of your evidence. Men are not to be licked out of their lives by the rough side of a lawyer's tongue."

"Nor is a foul Plot to be smothered," said the Attorney, "for all the haste your Lordship is in. I cannot call Master Chiffinch neither, as he is employed on the King's especial affairs, as I am this instant certiorated from the Court at Whitehall."

"Produce the papers, then, Master Attorney, of which this young man is said to be the bearer," said the Judge.

"They are before the Privy Council, my Lord."

"Then why do you found on them here?" said the Judge—"This is something like trifling with the Court."

"Since your Lordship gives it that name," said the Attorney, sitting down in a huff, "you may manage the cause as you will."

"If you do not bring more evidence, I pray you to charge the Jury," said the Judge.

"I shall not take the trouble to do so," said the Crown Counsel. "I see plainly how the matter is to go."

"Nay, but be better advised," said Scroggs. "Consider, your case is but half proved respecting the two Peverils, and doth not pinch on the little man at all, saving that Doctor Oates said that he was in a certain case to prove a giant, which seems no very probable Popish miracle."

This sally occasioned a laugh in the Court, which the Attorney-General seemed to take in great dudgeon.

"Master Attorney," said Oates, who always interfered in the management of these lawsuits, "this is a plain and absolute giving away of the cause—I must needs say it, a mere stoifling of the Plaat."

"Then the devil who bred it may blow wind into it again, if he lists," answered the Attorney-General; and, flinging down his brief, he left the Court, as if in huff with all who were concerned in the affair.

The Judge having obtained silence—for a murmur arose in the Court when the Counsel for the prosecution threw up his brief,—began to charge the Jury, balancing, as he had done throughout the whole day, the different opinions by which he seemed alternately swayed. He protested on his salvation that he had no more doubt of the existence of the horrid and damnable conspiracy called the Popish Plot, than he had of the treachery of Judas Iscariot; and that he considered Oates as the instrument under Providence of preserving the nation from all the miseries of his Majesty's assassination, and of a second Saint Bartholomew, acted in the streets of London. But then he stated it was the candid construction of the law of England, that the worse the crime, the more strong should be the evidence. Here was the case of accessories tried, whilst their principal —for such he should call the Countess of Derby—was unconvicted and at large; and for Doctor Oates, he had but spoke of matters which personally applied to that noble lady, whose words, if she used such in passion,

touching aid which she expected in some treasonable matters from these Peverils, and from her kinsman, or her son's kinsmen, of the House of Stanley, may have been but a burst of female resentment—*dulcis Amaryllidis ira*, as the poet hath it. Who knoweth but Doctor Oates did mistake—he being a gentleman of a comely countenance and easy demeanour—this same rap with the fan as a chastisement for lack of courage in the Catholic cause, when, peradventure, it was otherwise meant, as Popish ladies will put, it is said, such neophytes and youthful canditates for orders, to many severe trials. "I speak these things jocularly," said the Judge, "having no wish to stain the reputation either of the Honourable Countess or the Reverend Doctor; only I think the bearing between them may have related to something short of high treason. As for what the Attorney-General hath set forth of rescues and force, and I wot not what, sure I am, that in a civil country, when such things happen, such things may be proved; and that you and I, gentlemen, are not to take them for granted gratuitously. Touching this other prisoner, this *Galfridus minimus*, he must needs say," he continued, "he could not discover even a shadow of suspicion against him. Was it to be thought so abortive a creature would thrust himself into depths of policy, far less into stratagems of war? They had but to look at him to conclude the contrary—the creature was, from his age, fitter for the grave than a conspiracy—and by his size and appearance, for the inside of a raree-show, than the mysteries of a plot."

The dwarf here broke in upon the Judge by force of screaming, to assure him that he had been, simple as he sat there, engaged in seven plots in Cromwell's time; and, as he proudly, added, with some of the tallest men of England. The matchless look and air with which Sir Geoffrey made this vaunt, set all a-laughing, and increased the ridicule with which the whole trial began to be received; so that it was amidst shaking sides and watery eyes that a general verdict of Not Guilty was pronounced, and the prisoners dismissed from the bar.

But a warmer sentiment awakened among those who saw the father and son throw themselves into each other's arms, and, after a hearty embrace, extend their hands to their poor little companion in peril, who, like a dog, when present at a similar scene, had at last succeeded, by stretching himself up to them and whimpering at the same time, to secure to himself a portion of their sympathy and gratulation.

Such was the singular termination of this trial. Charles himself was desirous to have taken considerable credit with the Duke of Ormond for the evasion of the law, which had been thus effected by his private connivance; and was both surprised and mortified at the coldness with which his Grace replied, that he was rejoiced at the poor gentlemen's safety, but would rather have had the King redeem them like a prince, by his royal prerogative of mercy, than that his Judge should convey them out of the power of the law, like a juggler with his cups and balls.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-SECOND.

———On fair ground
I could beat forty of them!
CORIOLANUS.

IT doubtless occurred to many that were present at the trial we have described, that it was managed in a singular manner, and that the quarrel, which had the appearance of having taken place between the Court and the Crown Counsel, might proceed from some private understanding betwixt them, the object of which was the miscarriage of the accusation. Yet though such underhand dealing was much suspected, the greater part of the audience, being well educated and intelligent, had already suspected the bubble of the Popish Plot, and were glad to see that accusations, founded on what had already cost so much blood, could be evaded in any way. But the crowd, who waited in the Court of Requests, and in the hall, and without doors, viewed in a very different light the combination, as they interpreted it, between the Judge and the Attorney-General, for the escape of the prisoners.

Oates, whom less provocation than he had that day received often induced to behave like one frantic with passion, threw himself amongst the crowd, and repeated till he was hoarse, "Theay are stoifling the Plaat!—theay are straangling the Plaat!—My Laard Justice and Maaster Attarney are in league to secure the escape of the plaaters and Paapists!"

"It is the device of the Papist whore of Portsmouth," said one.

"Of old Rowley himself," said another.

"If he could be murdered by himself, why, hang those that would hinder it!" exclaimed a third.

"He should be tried," said a fourth, "for conspiring his own death, and hanged *in terrorem*."

In the meanwhile, Sir Geoffrey, his son, and their little companion, left the hall, intending to go to Lady Peveril's lodgings, which had been removed to Fleet Street. She had been relieved from considerable inconvenience, as Sir Geoffrey gave Julian hastily to understand, by an angel, in the shape of a young friend, and she now expected them doubtless with impatience. Humanity, and some indistinct idea of having unintentionally hurt the feelings of the poor dwarf, induced the honest Cavalier to ask this unprotected being to go with them. "He knew Lady Peveril's lodgings were but small," he said; "but it would be strange, if there was not some cupboard large enough to accommodate the little gentleman."

The dwarf registered this well-meant remark in his mind, to be the subject of a proper explanation, along

with the unhappy reminiscence of the trencher-horn-pipe, whenever time should permit an argument of such nicety.

And thus they sallied from the hall, attracting general observation, both from the circumstances in which they had stood so lately, and from their resemblance, as a wag of the Inner Temple expressed it, to the three degrees of comparison, Large, Lesser, Least. But they had not passed far along the street, when Julian perceived, that more malevolent passions than mere curiosity began to actuate the crowd, which followed, and, as it were, dogged their motions.

"There go the Papist cut-throats, tantivy for Rome!" said one fellow.

"Tantivy to Whitehall, you mean!" said another.

"Ah! the bloodthirsty villains!" cried a woman: "Shame, one of them should be suffered to live, after poor Sir Edmundsbury's cruel murder."

"Out upon the mealy-mouthed jury, that turned out the bloodhounds on an innocent town!" cried a fourth.

In short, the tumult thickened, and the word began to pass among the more desperate, "Lambe them, lads; lambe them!"—a cant phrase of the time, derived from the fate of Dr. Lambe, an astrologer and quack, who was knocked on the head by the rabble in Charles the First's time.

Julian began to be much alarmed at these symptoms of violence, and regretted that they had not gone down to the city by water. It was now too late to think of that mode of retreating, and he therefore requested his

father in a whisper to walk steadily forward towards Charing Cross, taking no notice of the insults which might be cast upon them, while the steadiness of their pace and appearance might prevent the rabble from resorting to actual violence. The execution of this prudent resolution was prevented after they had passed the palace, by the hasty disposition of the elder Sir Geoffrey, and the no less choleric temper of Galfridus Minimus, who had a soul which spurned all odds, as well of numbers as of size.

"Now a murrain take the knaves, with their hollowing and whooping," said the larger knight; "by this day, if I could but light on a weapon, I would cudgel reason and loyalty into some of their carcasses!"

"And I also," said the dwarf, who was toiling to keep up with the longer strides of his companions, and therefore spoke in a very phthisical tone,—"I also will cudgel the plebeian knaves beyond measure—he!—hem!"

Among the crowd who thronged around them, impeded, and did all but assault them, was a mischievous shoemaker's apprentice, who, hearing this unlucky vaunt of the valorous dwarf, repaid it by flapping him on the head with a boot which he was carrying home to the owner, so as to knock the little gentleman's hat over his eyes. The dwarf, thus rendered unable to discover the urchin that had given him the offence, flew with instinctive ambition against the biggest fellow in the crowd, who received the onset with a kick on the stomach, which made the poor little champion reel back

to his companions. They were now assaulted on all sides; but fortune, complying with the wish of Sir Geoffrey the larger, ordained that the scuffle should happen near the booth of a cutler, from amongst whose wares, as they stood exposed to the public, Sir Geoffrey Peveril snatched a broadsword, which he brandished with the formidable address of one who had for many a day been in the familiar practice of using such a weapon. Julian, while at the same time he called loudly for a peace officer, and reminded the assailants that they were attacking inoffensive passengers, saw nothing better for it than to imitate his father's example, and seized also one of the weapons thus opportunely offered.

When they displayed these demonstrations of defence, the rush which the rabble at first made towards them was so great as to throw down the unfortunate dwarf, who would have been trampled to death in the scuffle, had not his stout old namesake cleared the rascal crowd from about him with a few flourishes of his weapon, and seizing on the fallen champion, put him out of danger (except from missiles), by suddenly placing him on the bulkhead, that is to say, the flat wooden roof of the cutler's projecting booth. From the rusty ironware which was displayed there, the dwarf instantly snatched an old rapier and target, and, covering himself with the one, stood making passes with the other, at the faces and eyes of the people in the street; so much delighted with his post of vantage, that he called loudly to his friends who were skirmishing

with the rioters on more equal terms as to position, to lose no time in putting themselves under his protection. But far from being in a situation to need his assistance, the father and son might easily have extricated themselves from the rabble by their own exertions, could they have thought of leaving the mannikin in the forlorn situation, in which, to every eye but his own, he stood like a diminutive puppet, tricked out with sword and target as a fencing-master's sign.

Stones and sticks began now to fly very thick, and the crowd, notwithstanding the exertions of the Peverils to disperse them with as little harm as possible, seemed determined on mischief, when some gentlemen who had been at the trial, understanding that the prisoners who had been just acquitted were in danger of being murdered by the populace, drew their swords, and made forward to effect their rescue, which was completed by a small party of the King's Life-Guards, who had been despatched from their ordinary post of alarm, upon intelligence of what was passing. When this unexpected reinforcement arrived, the old jolly Knight at once recognized, amidst the cries of those who then entered upon action, some of the sounds which had animated his more active years.

"Where be these cuckoldy Roundheads," cried some. —"Down with the sneaking knaves!" cried others.— "The King and his friends, and the devil a one else!" exclaimed a third set, with more oaths and d—n me's, than, in the present more correct age, it is necessary to commit to paper.

The old soldier, pricking up his ears like an ancient hunter at the cry of the hounds, would gladly have scoured the Strand, with the charitable purpose, now he saw himself so well supported, of knocking the London knaves, who had insulted him, into twiggen bottles; but he was withheld by the prudence of Julian, who, though himself extremely irritated by the unprovoked ill-usage which they had received, saw himself in a situation in which it was necessary to exercise more caution than vengeance. He prayed and pressed his father to seek some temporary place of retreat from the fury of the populace, while that prudent measure was yet in their power. The subaltern officer who commanded the party of the Life-Guards, exhorted the old Cavalier eagerly to the same sage counsel, using, as a spice of compulsion, the name of the King; while Julian strongly urged that of his mother. The old Knight looked at his blade, crimsoned with cross-cuts and slashes which he had given to the most forward of the assailants, with the eye of one not half sufficed.

"I would I had pinked one of the knaves at least —but I know not how it was, when I looked on their broad round English faces, I shunned to use my point, and only sliced the rogues a little."

"But the King's pleasure," said the officer, "is, that no tumult be prosecuted."

"My mother," said Julian, "will die with fright, if the rumour of this scuffle reaches her ere we see her."

"Ay, ay," said the Knight, "the King's Majesty,

and my good dame—well, their pleasure be done, that's all I can say—Kings and ladies must be obeyed. But which way to retreat, since retreat we needs must?"

Julian would have been at some loss to advise what course to take, for every body in the vicinity had shut up their shops, and chained their doors, upon observing the confusion become so formidable. The poor cutler, however, with whose goods they made so free, offered them an asylum on the part of his landlord, whose house served as a rest for his shop, and only intimated gently, he hoped the gentlemen would consider him for the use of his weapons.

Julian was hastily revolving whether they ought, in prudence, to accept this man's invitation, aware, by experience, how many trepans, as they were then termed, were used betwixt two contending factions, each too inveterate to be very scrupulous of the character of fair play to an enemy, when the dwarf, exerting his cracked voice to the uttermost, and shrieking like an exhausted herald, from the exalted station which he still occupied on the bulk-head, exhorted them to accept the offer of the worthy man of the mansion. "He himself," he said, as he reposed himself after the glorious conquest in which he had some share, "had been favoured with a beatific vision, too splendid to be described to common and mere mortal ears, but which had commanded him, in a voice to which his heart had bounded as to a trumpet sound, to take refuge with the worthy person of the house, and cause his friends to do so."

"Vision!" said the Knight of the Peak,—"sound of a trumpet!—the little man is stark mad."

But the cutler, in great haste, intimated to them that their little friend had received an intimation from a gentlewoman of his acquaintance, who spoke to him from the window, while he stood on the bulk-head, that they would find a safe retreat in his landlord's; and, desiring them to attend to two or three deep though distant huzzas, made them aware that the rabble were up still, and would soon be upon them with renewed violence, and increased numbers.

The father and son, therefore, hastily thanked the officer and his party, as well as the other gentlemen who had volunteered in their assistance, lifted little Sir Geoffrey Hudson from the conspicuous post which he had so creditably occupied during the skirmish, and followed the footsteps of the tenant of the booth, who conducted them down a blind alley, and through one or two courts, in case, as he said, any one might have watched where they burrowed, and so into a back-door. This entrance admitted them to a staircase carefully hung with straw mats to exclude damp, from the upper step of which they entered upon a tolerably large with-drawing-room, hung with coarse green serge edged with gilded leather, which the poorer or more economical citizens at that time used instead of tapestry or wainscoting.

Here the poor cutler received from Julian such a gratuity for the loan of the swords, that he generously abandoned the property to the gentlemen who had used

them so well; "the rather," he said, "that he saw, by the way they handled their weapons, that they were men of mettle, and tall fellows."

Here the dwarf smiled on him courteously, and bowed, thrusting, at the same time, his hand into his pocket, which, however, he withdrew carelessly, probably because he found he had not the means of making the small donation which he had meditated.

The cutler proceeded to say, as he bowed and was about to withdraw, that he saw there would be merry days yet in Old England, and that Bilboa blades would fetch as good a price as ever. "I remember," he said, "gentlemen, though I was then but a 'prentice, the demand for weapons in the years forty-one and forty-two; sword-blades were more in request than toothpicks, and Old Ironsides, my master, took more for rascally Provant rapiers, than I dare ask now-a-days for a Toledo. But, to be sure, a man's life then rested on the blade he carried; the Cavaliers and Roundheads fought every day at the gates of Whitehall, as it is like, gentlemen, by your good example, they may do again, when I shall be enabled to leave my pitiful booth, and open a shop of better quality. I hope you will recommend me, gentlemen, to your friends. I am always provided with ware which a gentleman may risk his life on."

"Thank you, good friend," said Julian, "I prithee begone. I trust we shall need thy ware no more for some time at least."

The cutler retired, while the dwarf hollowed after

him down stairs, that he would call on him soon, and equip himself with a longer blade, and one more proper for action; although, he said, the little weapon he had did well enough for a walking-sword, or in a skirmish with such canaille as they had been engaged with.

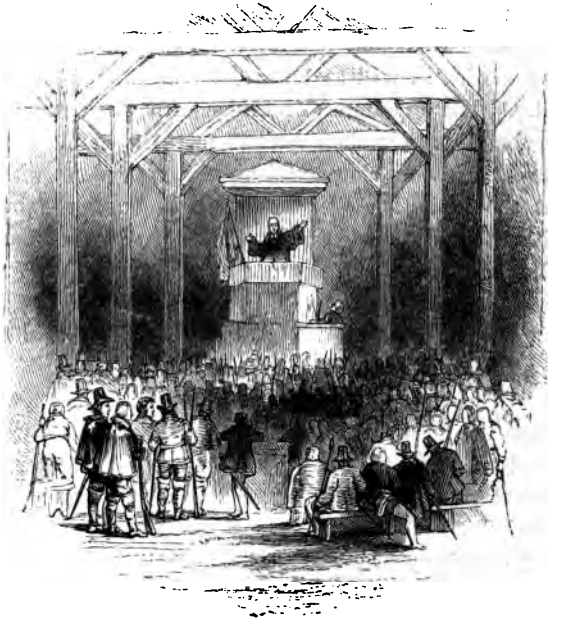
The cutler returned at this summons, and agreed to pleasure the little man with a weapon more suitable to his magnanimity; then, as if the thought had suddenly occurred to him, he said, "But, gentlemen, it will be but wild work to walk with your naked swords through the Strand, and it can scarce fail to raise the rabble again. If you please, while you repose yourselves here, I can fit the blades with sheaths."

The proposal seemed so reasonable, that Julian and his father gave up their weapons to the friendly cutler, an example which the dwarf followed, after a moment's hesitation, not caring, as he magnificently expressed it, to part so soon with the trusty friend which fortune had but the moment before restored to his hand. The man retired with the weapons under his arm; and, in shutting the door behind him, they heard him turn the key.

"Did you hear that?" said Sir Geoffrey to his son —"and we are disarmed."

Julian, without reply, examined the door, which was fast secured; and then looked at the casements, which were at a storey's height from the ground, and grated, besides, with iron. "I cannot think," he said, after a moment's pause, "that the fellow means to trepan us; and, in any event, I trust we should have no difficulty

in forcing the door, or otherwise making an escape. But, before resorting to such violent measures, I think it is better to give the rabble leisure to disperse, by waiting this man's return with our weapons within a reasonable time, when, if he does not appear, I trust we shall find little difficulty in extricating ourselves." As he spoke thus, the hangings were pulled aside, and, from a small door which was concealed behind them, Major Bridgenorth entered the room.



CHAPTER THE FORTY-THIRD.

> He came amongst them like a new-raised spirit,
> To speak of dreadful judgments that impend,
> And of the wrath to come.
>
> THE REFORMER.

THE astonishment of Julian at the unexpected apparition of Bridgenorth, was instantly succeeded by apprehension of his father's violence, which he had every

reason to believe would break forth against one, whom he himself could not but reverence on account of his own merits, as well as because he was the father of Alice. The appearance of Bridgenorth was not, however, such as to awaken resentment. His countenance was calm, his step slow and composed, his eye not without the indication of some deep-seated anxiety, but without any expression either of anger or of triumph. "You are welcome," he said, "Sir Geoffrey Peveril, to the shelter and hospitality of this house; as welcome as you would have been in other days, when we called each other neighbours and friends."

"Odzooks," said the old Cavalier, "and had I known it was thy house, man, I would sooner had my heart's blood run down the kennel, than my foot should have crossed your threshold—in the way of seeking safety, that is."

"I forgive your inveteracy," said Major Bridgenorth, "on account of your prejudices."

"Keep your forgiveness," answered the Cavalier, "until you are pardoned yourself. By Saint George I have sworn, if ever I got my heels out of yon rascally prison, whither I was sent much through your means, Master Bridgenorth,—that you should pay the reckoning for my bad lodging.—I will strike no man in his own house; but if you will cause the fellow to bring back my weapon, and take a turn in that blind court there below, along with me, you shall soon see what chance a traitor hath with a true man, and a kennel-blooded Puritan with Peveril of the Peak."

Bridgenorth smiled with much composure. "When I was younger and more warm-blooded," he replied, "I refused your challenge, Sir Geoffrey; it is not likely I should now accept it, when each is within a stride of the grave. I have not spared, and will not spare, my blood, when my country wants it."

"That is when there is any chance of treason against the King," said Sir Geoffrey.

"Nay, my father," said Julian, "let us hear Master Bridgenorth! We have been sheltered in his house; and although we now see him in London, we should remember that he did not appear against us this day, when perhaps his evidence might have given a fatal turn to our situation."

"You are right, young man," said Bridgenorth; "and it should be some pledge of my sincere good will, that I was this day absent from Westminster, when a few words from my mouth had ended the long line of Peveril of the Peak: It needed but ten minutes to walk to Westminster Hall, to have ensured your condemnation. But could I have done this, knowing, as I now know, that to thee, Julian Peveril, I owe the extrication of my daughter—of my dearest Alice—the memory of her departed mother—from the snares which hell and profligacy had opened around her?"

"She is, I trust, safe," said Peveril, eagerly, and almost forgetting his father's presence; "she is, I trust, safe, and in your own wardship?"

"Not in mine," said the dejected father; "but in

that of one in whose protection, next to that of Heaven, I can most fully confide."

"Are you sure—are you very sure of that?" repeated Julian, eagerly. "I found her under the charge of one to whom she had been trusted, and who yet——"

"And who yet was the basest of women," answered Bridgenorth; "but he who selected her for the charge was deceived in her character."

"Say rather you were deceived in his; remember that when we parted at Moultrassie, I warned you of that Ganlesse—that——"

"I know your meaning," said Bridgenorth; "nor did you err in describing him as a worldly-wise man. But he has atoned for his error by recovering Alice from the dangers into which she was plunged when separated from you; and besides, I have not thought meet again to intrust him with the charge that is dearest to me."

"I thank God your eyes are thus far opened!" said Julian.

"This day will open them wide, or close them for ever," answered Bridgenorth.

During this dialogue, which the speakers hurried through without attending to the others who were present, Sir Geoffrey listened with surprise and eagerness, endeavouring to catch something which should render their conversation intelligible; but as he totally failed in gaining any such key to their meaning, he broke in with,—"'Sblood and thunder, Julian, what unprofitable gossip is this? What hast thou to do

with this fellow, more than to bastinado him, if you should think it worth while to beat so old a rogue?"

"My dearest father," said Julian, "you know not this gentleman—I am certain you do him injustice. My own obligations to him are many; and I am sure when you come to know them——"

"I hope I shall die ere that moment come," said Sir Geoffrey; and continued with increasing violence, "I hope in the mercy of Heaven, that I shall be in the grave of my ancestors, ere I learn that my son—my only son—the last hope of my ancient house—the last remnant of the name of Peveril—hath consented to receive obligations from the man on earth I am most bound to hate, were I not still more bound to contemn him!—Degenerate dog-whelp!" he repeated with great vehemence, "you colour, without replying! Speak, and disown such disgrace; or, by the God of my fathers——"

The dwarf suddenly stepped forward, and called out, "Forbear!" with a voice at once so discordant and commanding, that it sounded supernatural. "Man of sin and pride," he said, "forbear; and call not the name of a holy God, to witness thine unhallowed resentments."

The rebuke so boldly and decidedly given, and the moral enthusiasm with which he spoke, gave the despised dwarf an ascendancy for the moment over the fiery spirit of his gigantic namesake. Sir Geoffrey Peveril eyed him for an instant askance and shyly, as he might have done a supernatural apparition, and

then muttered, "What knowest thou of my cause of wrath?"

"Nothing," said the dwarf;—"nothing but this—that no cause can warrant the oath thou wert about to swear. Ungrateful man! thou wert to-day rescued from the devouring wrath of the wicked, by a marvellous conjunction of circumstances—Is this a day, thinkest thou, on which to indulge thine own hasty resentments?"

"I stand rebuked," said Sir Geoffrey, "and by a singular monitor—the grasshopper, as the prayer-book saith, hath become a burden to me.—Julian, I will speak to thee of these matters hereafter;—and for you, Master Bridgenorth, I desire to have no farther communication with you, either in peace or in anger. Our time passes fast, and I would fain return to my family. Cause our weapons to be restored; unbar the doors, and let us part without farther altercation, which can but disturb and aggravate our spirits."

"Sir Geoffrey Peveril," said Bridgenorth, "I have no desire to vex your spirit or my own; but for thus soon dismissing you, that may hardly be, it being a course inconsistent with the work which I have on hand."

"How, sir! Do you mean that we should abide here, whether with or against our inclinations?" said the dwarf. "Were it not that I am laid under charge to remain here, by one who hath the best right to command this poor microcosm, I would shew thee that bolts and bars are unavailing restraints on such as I am."

"Truly," said Sir Geoffrey, "I think, upon an emer-

gency the little man might make his escape through the keyhole."

Bridgenorth's face was moved into something like a smile at the swaggering speech of the pigmy hero, and the contemptuous commentary of Sir Geoffrey Peveril; but such an expression never dwelt on his features for two seconds together, and he replied in these words:—"Gentlemen, each and all of you must be fain to content yourselves. Believe me, no hurt is intended towards you; on the contrary, your remaining here will be a means of securing your safety, which would be otherwise deeply endangered. It will be your own fault if a hair of your head is hurt. But the stronger force is on my side; and, whatever harm you may meet with should you attempt to break forth by violence, the blame must rest with yourselves. If you will not believe me, I will permit Master Julian Peveril to accompany me, where he shall see that I am provided fully with the means of repressing violence."

"Treason!—treason!" exclaimed the old Knight—"Treason against God and King Charles!—O for one half hour of the broadsword which I parted with like an ass!"

"Hold, my father, I conjure you!" said Julian. "I will go with Master Bridgenorth, since he requests it. I will satisfy myself whether there be danger, and of what nature. It is possible I may prevail on him to desist from some desperate measure, if such be indeed in agitation. Should it be necessary, fear not that your son will behave as he ought to do."

"Do your pleasure, Julian," said his father; "I will confide in thee. But if you betray my confidence, a father's curse shall cleave to you."

Bridgenorth now motioned to Peveril to follow him, and they passed through the small door by which he had entered.

The passage led to a vestibule or anteroom, in which several other doors and passages seemed to centre. Through one of these Julian was conducted by Bridgenorth, walking with silence and precaution, in obedience to a signal made by his guide to that effect. As they advanced, he heard sounds, like those of the human voice, engaged in urgent and emphatic declamation. With slow and light steps Bridgenorth conducted him through a door which terminated this passage; and as he entered a little gallery, having a curtain in front, the sound of the preacher's voice—for such it now seemed—became distinct and audible.

Julian now doubted not that he was in one of those conventicles, which, though contrary to the existing laws, still continued to be regularly held in different parts of London and the suburbs. Many of these, as frequented by persons of moderate political principles, though dissenters from the church for conscience' sake, were connived at by the prudence or timidity of the government. But some of them, in which assembled the fiercer and more exalted sects of Independents, Anabaptists, Fifth-Monarchy men, and other sectaries, whose stern enthusiasm had contributed so greatly to effect the overthrow of the late King's throne, were

sought after, suppressed, and dispersed, whenever they could be discovered.

Julian was soon satisfied that the meeting into which he was thus secretly introduced, was one of the latter class; and, to judge by the violence of the preacher, of the most desperate character. He was still more effectually convinced of this, when, at a sign from Bridgenorth, he cautiously unclosed a part of the curtain which hung before the gallery, and thus, unseen himself, looked down on the audience, and obtained a view of the preacher.

About two hundred persons were assembled beneath, in an area filled up with benches, as if for the exercise of worship; and they were all of the male sex, and well armed with pikes and muskets, as well as swords and pistols. Most of them had the appearance of veteran soldiers, now past the middle of life, yet retaining such an appearance of strength as might well supply the loss of youthful agility. They stood, or sat, in various attitudes of stern attention; and, resting on their spears and muskets, kept their eyes firmly fixed on the preacher, who ended the violence of his declamation by displaying from the pulpit a banner, on which was represented a lion, with the motto, "*Vicit Leo ex tribu Judæ.*"

The torrent of mystical yet animating eloquence of the preacher—an old gray-haired man, whom zeal seemed to supply with the powers of voice and action, of which years had deprived him—was suited to the taste of his audience; but could not be transferred to

these pages without scandal and impropriety. He menaced the rulers of England with all the judgments denounced on those of Moab and Assyria—he called upon the saints to be strong, to be up and doing; and promised those miracles which, in the campaigns of Joshua, and his successors the valiant Judges of Israel, supplied all odds against the Amorites, Midianites, and Philistines. He sounded trumpets, opened vials, broke seals, and denounced approaching judgments under all the mystical signs of the Apocalypse. The end of the world was announced, accompanied with all its preliminary terrors.

Julian, with deep anxiety, soon heard enough to make him aware, that the meeting was likely to terminate in open insurrection, like that of the Fifth-Monarchy men, under Venner, at an earlier period of Charles's reign; and he was not a little concerned at the probability of Bridgenorth being implicated in so criminal and desperate an undertaking. If he had retained any doubts of the issue of the meeting, they must have been removed when the preacher called on his hearers to renounce all expectation which had hitherto been entertained of safety to the nation, from the execution of the ordinary laws of the land. This, he said, was at best but a carnal seeking after earthly aid—a going down to Egypt for help, which the jealousy of their Divine Leader would resent as a fleeing to another rock, and a different banner, from that which was this day displayed over them.—And here he solemnly swung the bannered lion over their heads, as

the only sign under which they ought to seek for life and safety. He then proceeded to insist, that recourse to ordinary justice was vain as well as sinful.

"The event of that day at Westminster," he said, "might teach them that the Man at Whitehall was even as the Man his father;" and he closed a long tirade against the vices of the Court, with assurance "that Tophet was ordained of old—for the King it was made hot."

As the preacher entered on a description of the approaching theocracy, which he dared to prophesy, Bridgenorth, who appeared for a time to have forgotten the presence of Julian, whilst with stern and fixed attention he drank in the words of the preacher, seemed suddenly to collect himself, and, taking Julian by the hand, led him out of the gallery, of which he carefully closed the door, into an apartment at no great distance.

When they arrived there, he anticipated the expostulations of Julian, by asking him, in a tone of severe triumph, whether these men he had seen were likely to do their work negligently, or whether it would not be perilous to attempt to force their way from a house, when all the avenues were guarded by such as he had now seen—men of war from their childhood upwards.

"In the name of Heaven," said Julian, without replying to Bridgenorth's question, "for what desperate purpose have you assembled so many desperate men? I am well aware that your sentiments of religion are peculiar; but beware how you deceive yourself—No views of religion can sanction rebellion and murder;

and such are the natural and necessary consequences of the doctrine we have just heard poured into the ears of fanatical and violent enthusiasts."

"My son," said Bridgenorth, calmly, "in the days of my nonage, I thought as you do. I deemed it sufficient to pay my tithes of cummin and aniseed—my poor petty moral observances of the old law; and I thought I was heaping up precious things, when they were in value no more than the husks of the swine-trough. Praised be Heaven, the scales are fallen from mine eyes; and after forty years' wandering in the desert of Sinai, I am at length arrived in the Land of Promise—My corrupt human nature has left me—I have cast my slough, and can now with some conscience put my hand to the plough, certain that there is no weakness left in me wherethrough I may look back. The furrows," he added, bending his brows, while a gloomy fire filled his large eyes, "must be drawn long and deep, and watered by the blood of the mighty."

There was a change in Bridgenorth's tone and manner, when he used these singular expressions, which convinced Julian, that his mind, which had wavered for so many years, between his natural good sense and the insane enthusiasm of the time, had finally given way to the latter; and, sensible of the danger in which the unhappy man himself, the innocent and beautiful Alice, and his own father, were likely to be placed—to say nothing of the general risk of the community by a sudden insurrection, he at the same time felt that there was no chance of reasoning effectually with one who

would oppose spiritual conviction to all arguments which reason could urge against his wild schemes. To touch his feelings seemed a more probable resource; and Julian therefore conjured Bridgenorth to think how much his daughter's honour and safety were concerned in his abstaining from the dangerous course which he meditated. "If you fall," he said, "must she not pass under the power and guardianship of her uncle, whom you allow to have shewn himself capable of the grossest mistake in the choice of her female protectress; and whom I believe, upon good grounds, to have made that infamous choice with his eyes open?"

"Young man," answered Bridgenorth, "you make me feel like the poor bird, around whose wing some wanton boy has fixed a line, to pull the struggling wretch to earth at his pleasure. Know since thou wilt play this cruel part, and drag me down from higher contemplations, that she with whom Alice is placed, and who hath in future full power to guide her motions and decide her fate, despite of Christian and every one else, is—I will not tell thee who she is—Enough—no one—thou least of all, needs to fear for her safety."

At this moment a side-door opened, and Christian himself came into the apartment. He started and coloured when he saw Julian Peveril; then turning to Bridgenorth with an assumed air of indifference, asked, "Is Saul among the prophets?—Is a Peveril among the saints?"

"No, brother," replied Bridgenorth, "his time is not come more than thine own—thou art too deep in

the ambitious intrigues of manhood, and he in the giddy passions of youth, to hear the still calm voice—You will both hear it, as I trust and pray."

"Master Ganlesse, or Christian, or by whatever name you are called," said Julian, "by whatever reasons you guide yourself in this most perilous matter, *you* at least are not influenced by any idea of an immediate divine command for commencing hostilities against the state. Leaving, therefore, for the present, whatever subjects of discussion may be between us, I implore you, as a man of shrewdness and sense, to join with me in dissuading Master Bridgenorth from the fatal enterprise which he now meditates."

"Young gentleman," said Christian with great composure, "when we met in the west, I was willing to have made a friend of you, but you rejected the overture. You might, however, even then have seen enough of me to be assured, that I am not likely to rush too rashly on any desperate undertaking. As to this which lies before us, my brother Bridgenorth brings to it the simplicity, though not the harmlessness of the dove, and I the subtilty of the serpent. He hath the leading of saints who are moved by the spirit; and I can add to their efforts a powerful body, who have for their instigators, the world, the devil, and the flesh."

"And can you," said Julian, looking at Bridgenorth, "accede to such an unworthy union?"

"I unite not with them," said Bridgenorth; "but I may not, without guilt, reject the aid which Providence sends to assist his servants. We are ourselves

few, though determined—Those whose swords come to help the cutting down of the harvest, must be welcome —When their work is wrought they will be converted or scattered. Have you been at York Place, brother, with that unstable epicure? We must have his last resolution, and that within an hour."

Christian looked at Julian, as if his presence prevented him from returning an answer; upon which Bridgenorth arose, and taking the young man by the arm, led him out of the apartment into that in which they had left his father; assuring him by the way, that determined and vigilant guards were placed in every different quarter by which escape could be effected, and that he would do well to persuade his father to remain a quiet prisoner for a few hours.

Julian returned him no answer, and Bridgenorth presently retired leaving him alone with his father and Hudson. To their questions he could only briefly reply, that he feared they were trepanned, since they were in the house with at least two hundred fanatics, completely armed, and apparently prepared for some desperate enterprise. Their own want of arms precluded the possibility of open violence; and however unpleasant it might be to remain in such a condition, it seemed difficult, from the strength of the fastenings at doors and windows, to attempt any secret escape without instantaneous detection.

The valiant dwarf alone nursed hopes, with which he in vain endeavoured to inspire his companions in affliction. "The fair one whose eyes," he said, "were

like the twin stars of Leda"—for the little man was a great admirer of lofty language—"had not invited him, the most devoted, and, it might be, not the least favoured of her servants, into this place as a harbour, in order that he might therein suffer shipwreck; and he generously assured his friends, that in his safety they also should be safe."

Sir Geoffrey, little cheered by this intimation, expressed his despair at not being able to get the length of Whitehall, where he trusted to find as many jolly Cavaliers as would help him to stifle the whole nest of wasps in their hive; while Julian was of opinion that the best service he could now render Bridgenorth, would be timeously to disclose his plot, and, if possible to send him at the same time warning to save his person.

But we must leave them to meditate over their plans at leisure; no one of which, as they all depended on their previous escape from confinement, seemed in any great chance of being executed.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-FOURTH.

And some for safety took the dreadful leap;
Some for the voice of Heaven seem'd calling on them;
Some for advancement, or for lucre's sake—
I leap'd in frolic. THE DREAM.

AFTER a private conversation with Bridgenorth, Christian hastened to the Duke of Buckingham's hotel, taking at the same time such a route as to avoid meet-

you, is a thing not to be forgiven.—What! injure my old friend Christian?"

"And why not," said Christian, coolly, "if your old friend was so stubborn as not to go out of town like a good boy, when your Grace required him to do so, for the civil purpose of entertaining his niece in his absence?"

"How—what!—how do you mean by *my* entertaining your niece, Master Christian?" said the Duke. "She was a personage far beyond my poor attentions, being destined, if I recollect aright, to something like royal favour."

"It was her fate, however, to be the guest of your Grace's convent for a brace of days, or so. Marry, my lord, the father confessor was not at home, and—for convents have been scaled of late—returned not till the bird was flown."

"Christian, thou art an old reynard—I see there is no doubling with thee. It was thou, then, stole away my pretty prize, but left me something so much prettier in my mind, that, had it not made itself wings to fly away with, I would have placed it in a cage of gold. Never be downcast, man; I forgive thee—I forgive thee."

"Your Grace is of a most merciful disposition, especially considering it is I who have had the wrong; and sages have said, that he who doth the injury, is less apt to forgive than he who only sustains it."

"True, true, Christian," said the Duke, "which, as you say, is something quite new, and places my

clemency in a striking point of view. Well, then, thou forgiven man, when shall I see my Mauritanian Princess again?"

"Whenever I am certain that a quibble and a carwhichit, for a play or a sermon, will not banish her from your Grace's memory."

"Not all the wit of South, or of Etherege," said Buckingham, hastily, "to say nothing of my own, shall in future make me oblivious of what I owe the Morisco Princess."

"Yet, to leave the fair lady out of thought for a little while—a very little while," said Christian, "since I swear that in due time your Grace shall see her, and know in her the most extraordinary woman that the age has produced—to leave her, I say, out of sight for a little while, has your Grace had late notice of your Duchess's health?"

"Health!" said the Duke. "Umph—no—nothing particular. She has been ill—but——"

"She is no longer so," subjoined Christian; "she died in Yorkshire forty-eight hours since."

"Thou must deal with the devil," said the Duke.

"It would ill become one of my name to do so," replied Christian. "But, in the brief interval since your Grace hath known of an event which hath not yet reached the public ear, you have, I believe, made proposals to the King for the hand of the Lady Anne, second daughter of the Duke of York, and your Grace's proposals have been rejected."

"Fiends and firebrands, villain!" said the Duke,

starting up, and seizing Christian by the collar; "who hath told thee that?"

"Take your hand from my cloak, my Lord Duke, and I may answer you," said Christian. "I have a scurvy touch of old puritanical humour about me. I abide not the imposition of hands—take off your grasp from my cloak, or I will find means to make you unloose it."

The Duke, who had kept his right hand on his dagger-hilt while he held Christian's collar with his left, unloosed it as he spoke, but slowly, and as one who rather suspends than abandons the execution of some hasty impulse; while Christian, adjusting his cloak with perfect composure, said, "Soh—my cloak being at liberty, we speak on equal terms. I come not to insult your Grace, but to offer you vengeance for the insult you have received."

"Vengeance!" said the Duke—"It is the dearest proffer man can present to me in my present mood. I hunger for vengeance—thirst for vengeance—could die to ensure vengeance!—'Sdeath!" he continued, walking up and down the large apartment with the most unrestrained and violent agitation; "I have chased this repulse out of my brain with ten thousand trifles, because I thought no one knew it. But it is known, and to thee, the very common sewer of Court secrets—the honour of Villiers is in thy keeping, Ned Christian! Speak, thou man of wiles and of intrigue—on whom dost thou promise the vengeance? Speak! and if thy answers meet my desires, I will make a bargain with thee as willingly as with thy master, Satan himself."

"I will not be," said Christian, "so unreasonable in my terms as stories tell of the old apostate; I will offer your Grace, as he might do, temporal prosperity and revenge, which is his frequent recruiting money, but I leave it to yourself to provide, as you may be pleased, for your future salvation."

The Duke, gazing upon him fixedly and sadly, replied, "I would to God, Christian, that I could read what purpose of damnable villany thou hast to propose to me in thy countenance, without the necessity of thy using words!"

"Your Grace can but try a guess," said Christian, calmly smiling.

"No," replied the Duke, after gazing at him again for the space of a minute; "thou art so deeply dyed a hypocrite, that thy mean features, and clear gray eye, are as likely to conceal treason, as any petty scheme of theft or larceny, more corresponding to your degree."

"Treason, my lord!" echoed Christian; "you may have guessed more nearly than you were aware of. I honour your Grace's penetration."

"Treason!" echoed the Duke. "Who dare name such a crime to me?"

"If a name startles your Grace, you may call it vengeance—vengeance on the cabal of councillors, who have ever countermined you, in spite of your wit and your interest with the King.—Vengeance on Arlington, Ormond—on Charles himself."

"No, by Heaven," said the Duke, resuming his disordered walk through the apartment—"Vengeance on these rats of the Privy Council,—come at it as you

will. But the King!—never—never. I have provoked him a hundred times where he has stirred me once. I have crossed his path in state intrigue—rivalled him in love—had the advantage in both,—and, d—n it, he has forgiven me! If treason would put me in his throne, I have no apology for it—it were worse than bestial ingratitude."

"Nobly spoken, my lord," said Christian; "and consistent alike with the obligations under which your Grace lies to Charles Stuart, and the sense you have ever shewn of them.—But it signifies not. If your Grace patronise not our enterprise, there is Shaftesbury—there is Monmouth——"

"Scoundrel!" exclaimed the Duke, even more vehemently agitated than before, "think you that you shall carry on with others an enterprise which I have refused?—No, by every heathen and every Christian god!—Hark ye, Christian, I will arrest you on the spot—I will, by gods and devils, and carry you to unravel your plot at Whitehall."

"Where the first words I speak," answered the imperturbable Christian, "will be to inform the Privy Council in what place they may find certain letters, wherewith your Grace has honoured your poor vassal, containing, as I think, particulars which his Majesty will read with more surprise than pleasure."

"'Sdeath, villain!" said the Duke, once more laying his hand on his poniard hilt, "thou hast me again at advantage. I know not why I forbear to poniard you where you stand!"

"I might fall, my Lord Duke," said Christian, slightly colouring, and putting his right hand into his bosom, "though not, I think, unavenged—for I have not put my person into this peril altogether without means of defence. I might fall, but, alas! your Grace's correspondence is in hands, which, by that very act, would be rendered sufficiently active in handing them to the King and the Privy Council. What say you to the Moorish Princess, my Lord Duke? What if I have left her executrix of my will, with certain instructions how to proceed if I return not unharmed from York-Place? O, my lord, though my head is in the wolf's mouth, I was not goose enough to place it there without settling how many carabines should be fired on the wolf, so soon as my dying cackle was heard. Pshaw, my Lord Duke, you deal with a man of sense and courage, yet you speak to him as a child and a coward."

The Duke threw himself into a chair, fixed his eyes on the ground, and spoke without raising them.

"I am about to call Jerningham," he said; "but fear nothing—it is only for a draught of wine—That stuff on the table may be a vehicle for filberts and walnuts, but not for such communications as yours.—Bring me champagne," he said to the attendant who answered on his summons.

The domestic returned, and brought a flask of champagne, with two large silver cups. One of them he filled for Buckingham, who, contrary to the usual etiquette, was always served first at home, and then offered the other to Christian, who declined to receive it.

The Duke drank off the large goblet which was presented to him, and, for a moment, covered his forehead with the palm of his hand; then instantly withdrew it, and said, "Christian, speak your errand plainly. We know each other. If my reputation be in some degree in your hands, you are well aware that your life is in mine. Sit down," he said, taking a pistol from his bosom and laying it on the table—"Sit down, and let me hear your proposal."

"My lord," said Christian, smiling, "I shall produce no such ultimate argument on my part, though possibly, in time of need, I may not be found destitute of them. But my defence is in the situation of things, and in the composed view which, doubtless, your Majesty will take of them."

"Majesty!" repeated the Duke—"My good friend, Christian, you have kept company with the Puritans so long, that you confuse the ordinary titles of the Court."

"I know not how to apologize," said Christian, "unless your Grace will suppose that I spoke by prophecy."

"Such as the devil delivered to Macbeth," said the Duke—again paced the chamber, and again seated himself, and said, "Be plain, Christian—speak out at once, and manfully, what is it you intend?"

"*I*," said Christian—"What should I do?—I can do nothing in such a matter; but I thought it right that your Grace should know that the godly of this city"—(he spoke the word with a kind of ironical grin)—"are impatient of inactivity, and must needs be up

and doing. My brother Bridgenorth is at the head of all old Weiver's congregation; for you must know, that, after floundering from one faith to another, he hath now got beyond ordinances, and is become a Fifth-Monarchy man. He has nigh two hundred of Weiver's people, fully equipped, and ready to fall on; and, with slight aid from your Grace's people, they must carry Whitehall, and make prisoners of all within it."

"Rascal!" said the Duke, "and is it to a Peer of England you make this communication?"

"Nay," answered Christian, "I admit it would be extreme folly in your Grace to appear until all is over. But let me give Blood and the others a hint on your part. There are the four Germans also—right Knipperdolings and Anabaptists—will be specially useful. You are wise, my lord, and know the value of a corps of domestic gladiators, as well as did Octavius, Lepidus, and Anthony, when, by such family forces, they divided the world by indenture tripartite."

"Stay stay," said the Duke. "Even if these bloodhounds were to join with you—not that I would permit it without the most positive assurances for the King's personal safety—but say the villains were to join, what hope have you of carrying the Court?"

"Bully Tom Armstrong,* my lord, hath promised

* Thomas, or Sir Thomas Armstrong, a person who had distinguished himself in youth by duels and drunken exploits. He was particularly connected with the Duke of Monmouth, and was said to be concerned in the Rye-House Plot for which he suffered capital punishment, 20th June 1684.

his interest with the Life-Guards. Then there are my Lord Shaftesbury's brisk boys in the city—thirty thousand on the holding up a finger."

"Let him hold up both hands, and if he count a hundred for each finger," said the Duke, "it will be more than I expect. You have not spoken to him?"

"Surely not, till your Grace's pleasure was known. But, if he is not applied to, there is the Dutch train, Hans Snorehout's congregation, in the Strand—there are the French Protestants in Piccadilly—there are the Family of Levi in Lewkenor's Lane—the Muggletonians in Thames Street——"

"Ah, faugh!—Out upon them—out upon them!—How the knaves will stink of cheese and tobacco when they come upon action!—they will drown all the perfumes in Whitehall. Spare me the detail; and let me know, my dearest Ned, the sum total of thy most odoriferous forces."

"Fifteen hundred men, well armed," said Christian, "besides the rabble that will rise to a certainty—they have already nearly torn to pieces the prisoners who were this day acquitted on account of the Plot."

"All, then, I understand.—And now, hark ye, most christian Christian," said he, wheeling his chair full in front of that on which his agent was seated, "you have told me many things to-day—Shall I be equally communicative? Shall I shew you that my accuracy of information matches yours? Shall I tell you, in a word, why you have at once resolved to push every one, from the Puritan to the free-thinker, upon a general

attack of the Palace at Whitehall, without allowing me, a peer of the realm, time either to pause upon or to prepare for a step so desperate? Shall I tell you why you would lead or drive, seduce or compel me, into countenancing your measures?"

"My lord, if you please to form a guess," said Christian, "I will answer with all sincerity, if you have assigned the right cause."

"The Countess of Derby is this day arrived, and attends the Court this evening, with hopes of the kindest reception. She may be surprised amid the mêlée?—Ha! Said I not right, Master Christian? You, who pretend to offer me revenge, know yourself its exquisite sweetness."

"I would not presume," said Christian, half smiling, "to offer your Grace a dish, without acting as your taster as well as purveyor."

"That's honestly said," said the Duke. "Away then, my friend. Give Blood this ring—he knows it, and knows how to obey him who bears it. Let him assemble my gladiators, as thou dost most wittily term my *coup jarrets*. The old scheme of the German music may be resorted to, for I think thou hast the instruments ready. But take notice, I know nothing on't; and Rowley's person must be safe—I will hang and burn on all hands if a hair of his black periwig* be but singed.—Then what is to follow—a Lord Protector of

* Charles, to suit his dark complexion, always wore a black peruke. He used to say of the players, that if they wished to represent a villain on the stage, "Odds-fish, they always clapped

the realm—or stay—Cromwell has made the word somewhat slovenly and unpopular—a Lord Lieutenant of the Kingdom?—The patriots, who take it on themselves to revenge the injustice done to the country, and to remove evil counsellors from before the King's throne, that it may be henceforward established in righteousness—so I think the rubric runs—cannot fail to make a fitting choice."

"They cannot, my Lord Duke," said Christian, "since there is but one man in the three kingdoms on whom that choice can possibly fall."

"I thank you, Christian," said his Grace; "and I trust you. Away, and make all ready. Be assured your services shall not be forgot. We will have you near to us."

"My Lord Duke," said Christian, "you bind me doubly to you. But remember, that as your Grace is spared any obnoxious proceedings which may befall in the way of military execution, or otherwise, so it will be advisable that you hold yourself in preparation, upon a moment's notice, to put yourself at the head of a band of honourable friends and allies, and come presently to the palace, where you will be received by the victors as a commander, and by the vanquished as a preserver."

"I conceive you—I conceive you. I will be in prompt readiness," said the Duke.

on him a black periwig, whereas the greatest rogue in England [meaning, probably, Dr. Oates] wears a white one."—*See* CIBBER's *Apology*.

"Ay, my lord," continued Christian; "and, for Heaven's sake, let none of those toys, which are the very Delilahs of your imagination, come across your Grace this evening, and interfere with the execution of this sublime scheme."

"Why, Christian, dost think me mad?" was his Grace's emphatic reply. "It is you who linger, when all should be ordered for a deed so daring. Go then. —But hark ye, Ned; ere you go, tell me when I shall again see yonder thing of fire and air—yon Eastern Peri, that glides into apartments by the keyhole, and leaves them through the casement—yon black-eyed houri of the Mahometan paradise—when, I say, shall I see her once more?"

"When your Grace has the truncheon of Lord Lieutenant of the Kingdom," said Christian, and left the apartment.

Buckingham stood fixed in contemplation for a moment after he was gone. "Should I have done this?" he said, arguing the matter with himself; "or had I the choice, rather, of doing aught else? Should I not hasten to the Court, and make Charles aware of the treason which besets him? I will, by Heaven!— Here, Jerningham, my coach, with the despatch of light! —I will throw myself at his feet, and tell him of all the follies which I have dreamed of with this Christian. —And then he will laugh at me, and spurn me.—No, I have kneeled to him to-day already, and my repulse was nothing gentle. To be spurned once in the sun's daily round is enough for Buckingham."

Having made this reflection, he seated himself, and began hastily to mark down the young nobles and gentlemen of quality, and others, their very ignoble companions, who he supposed might be likely to assume him for their leader in any popular disturbance. He had nearly completed it, when Jerningham entered, to say the coach would be ready in an instant, and to bring his master's sword, hat, and cloak.

"Let the coachman draw off," said the Duke, "but be in readiness. And send to the gentlemen thou wilt find named in this list; say I am but ill at ease, and wish their company to a slight collation. Let instant expedition be made, and care not for expense; you will find most of them at the Club-House in Fuller's Rents."*

The preparations for festivity were speedily made, and the intended guests, most of them persons who were at leisure for any call that promised pleasure, though sometimes more deaf to those of duty, began speedily to assemble. There were many youths of the highest rank, and with them, as is usual in those circles, many of a different class, whom talents, or impudence, or wit, or a turn for gambling, had reared up into

* The place of meeting of the Green Ribbon Club. "Their place of meeting," says Roger North, "was in a sort of Carrefour at Chancery Lane, in a centre of business and company most proper for such anglers of fools. The house was double balconied in front, as may yet be seen, for the clubbers to issue forth in *fresco*, with hats and no perukes, pipes in their mouths, merry faces, and dilated throats for vocal encouragement of the canaglia below on usual and unusual occasions."

companions for the great and the gay. The Duke of Buckingham was a general patron of persons of this description; and a numerous attendance took place on the present occasion.

The festivity was pursued with the usual appliances of wine, music, and games of hazard; with which, however, there mingled in that period much more wit, and a good deal more gross profligacy of conversation, than the talents of the present generation can supply, or their taste would permit.

The Duke himself proved the complete command which he possessed over his versatile character, by maintaining the frolic, the laugh, and the jest, while his ear caught up, and with eagerness, the most distant sounds, as intimating the commencement of Christian's revolutionary project. Such sounds were heard from time to time, and from time to time they died away, without any of those consequences which Buckingham expected.

At length, and when it was late in the evening, Jerningham announced Master Chiffinch from the Court; and that worthy personage followed the annunciation.

"Strange things have happened my Lord Duke," he said; "your presence at Court is instantly required by his Majesty."

"You alarm me," said Buckingham, standing up. "I hope nothing has happened—I hope there is nothing wrong—I hope his Majesty is well?"

"Perfectly well," said Chiffinch; "and desirous to see your Grace without a moment's delay."

"This is sudden," said the Duke. "You see I have had merry fellows about me, and am scarce in case to appear, Chiffinch."

"Your Grace seems to be in very handsome plight," said Chiffinch; "and you know his Majesty is gracious enough to make allowances."

"True," said the Duke, not a little anxious in his mind, touching the cause of this unexpected summons —"True—his Majesty is most gracious—I will order my coach."

"Mine is below," replied the royal messenger; "it will save time, if your Grace will condescend to use it."

Forced from every evasion, Buckingham took a goblet from the table, and requested his friends to remain at his palace so long as they could find the means of amusement there. He expected, he said, to return almost immediately; if not, he would take farewell of them with his usual toast, "May all of us that are not hanged in the interval, meet together again here on the first Monday of next month."

This standing toast of the Duke bore reference to the character of several of his guests; but he did not drink it on the present occasion without some anticipation concerning his own fate, in case Christian had betrayed him. He hastily made some addition to his dress, and attended Chiffinch in the chariot to Whitehall.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-FIFTH.

High feasting was there there—the gilded roofs
Rung to the wassail-health—the dancer's step
Sprung to the chord responsive—the gay gamester
To fate's disposal flung his heap of gold,
And laugh'd alike when it increased or lessen'd:
Such virtue hath court-air to teach us patience
Which schoolmen preach in vain.

WHY COME YE NOT TO COURT?

UPON the afternoon of this eventful day, Charles held his Court in the Queen's apartments, which were opened at a particular hour to invited guests of a certain lower degree, but accessible without restriction to the higher classes of nobility who had from birth, and to the courtiers who held by office, the privilege of the *entrée*.

It was one part of Charles's character, which unquestionably rendered him personally popular, and postponed to a subsequent reign the precipitation of his family from the throne, that he banished from his court many of the formal restrictions with which it was in other reigns surrounded. He was conscious of the good-natured grace of his manners, and trusted to it, often not in vain, to remove evil impressions arising from actions, which he was sensible could not be justified on the grounds of liberal or national policy.

In the daytime the King was commonly seen in the public walks alone, or only attended by one or two persons; and his answer to the remonstrance of his brother, on the risk of thus exposing his person, is well known;—"Believe me, James," he said, "no one will murder *me*, to make *you* King."

In the same manner, Charles's evenings, unless such as were destined to more secret pleasures, were frequently spent amongst all who had any pretence to approach a courtly circle; and thus it was upon the night which we are treating of. Queen Catherine, reconciled or humbled to her fate, had long ceased to express any feelings of jealousy, nay, seemed so absolutely dead to such a passion, that she received at her drawing-room, without scruple, and even with encouragement, the Duchesses of Portsmouth and Cleveland, and others, who enjoyed, though in a less avowed character, the credit of having been royal favourites. Constraint of every kind was banished from a circle so composed, and which was frequented at the same time, if not by the wisest, at least by the wittiest courtiers, who ever assembled round a monarch, and who, as many of them had shared the wants, and shifts, and frolics of his exile, had then acquired a sort of prescriptive license, which the good-natured prince, when he attained his period of prosperity, could hardly have restrained, had it suited his temper to do so. This, however, was the least of Charles's thoughts. His manners were such as secured him from indelicate obtrusion; and he sought no other protection from

over-familiarity, than what these and his ready wit afforded him.

On the present occasion, he was peculiarly disposed to enjoy the scene of pleasure which had been prepared. The singular death of Major Coleby, which, taking place in his own presence, had proclaimed, with the voice of a passing bell, the ungrateful neglect of the Prince for whom he had sacrificed every thing, had given Charles much pain. But, in his own opinion at least, he had completely atoned for this negligence, by the trouble which he had taken for Sir Geoffrey Peveril and his son, whose liberation he looked upon not only as an excellent good deed in itself, but, in spite of the grave rebuke of Ormond, as achieved in a very pardonable manner, considering the difficulties with which he was surrounded. He even felt a degree of satisfaction on receiving intelligence from the city that there had been disturbances in the streets, and that some of the more violent fanatics had betaken themselves to their meeting-houses, upon sudden summons to inquire, as their preachers phrased it, into the causes of Heaven's wrath, and into the backsliding of the Court, lawyers, and jury, by whom the false and bloody favourers of the Popish Plot were screened and cloaked from deserved punishment.

The King, we repeat, seemed to hear these accounts with pleasure, even when he was reminded of the dangerous and susceptible character of those with whom such suspicions originated. "Will any one now assert," he said, with self-complaisance, "that I am so

utterly negligent of the interest of friends?—You see the peril in which I place myself, and even the risk to which I have exposed the public peace, to rescue a man whom I have scarce seen for twenty years, and then only in his buff-coat and bandoleers, with other Train-Band officers who kissed hands upon the Restoration. They say kings have long hands—I think they have as much occasion for long memories, since they are expected to watch over and reward every man in England, who hath but shewn his good-will by crying 'God save the King!'"

"Nay, the rogues are even more unreasonable still," said Sedley; "for every knave of them thinks himself entitled to your Majesty's protection in a good cause, whether he has cried God save the King or no."

The King smiled, and turned to another part of the stately hall, where every thing was assembled which could, according to the taste of the age, make the time glide pleasantly away.

In one place, a group of the young nobility, and of the ladies of the Court, listened to the reader's acquaintance Empson, who was accompanying, with his unrivalled breathings on the flute, a young siren, who, while her bosom palpitated with pride and with fear, warbled to the courtly and august presence the beautiful air beginning

> "Young I am, and yet unskilled
> How to make a lover yield," etc.

She performed her task in a manner so corresponding with the strains of the amatory poet, and the voluptuous

air with which the words had been invested by the celebrated Purcel, that the men crowded around in ecstasies, while most of the ladies thought it proper either to look extremely indifferent to the words she sung, or to withdraw from the circle as quietly as possible. To the song succeeded a concerto, performed by a select band of most admirable musicians, which the King, whose taste was indisputable, had himself selected.

At other tables in the apartment, the elder courtiers worshipped Fortune, at the various fashionable games of ombre, quadrille, hazard, and the like; while heaps of gold which lay before the players, augmented or dwindled with every turn of a card or cast of a die. Many a year's rent of fair estates was ventured upon the main or the odds; which, spent in the old deserted manor-house, had repaired the ravages of Cromwell upon its walls, and replaced the sources of good housekeeping and hospitality, that, exhausted in the last age by fine and sequestration, were now in a fair way of being annihilated by careless prodigality. Elsewhere, under cover of observing the gamester, or listening to the music, the gallantries of that all-licensed age were practised among the gay and fair, closely watched the whilst by the ugly or the old, who promised themselves at least the pleasure of observing, and it may be that of proclaiming, intrigues in which they could not be sharers.

From one table to another glided the merry Monarch, exchanging now a glance with a Court beauty, now a

jest with a Court wit, now beating time to the music, and anon losing or winning a few pieces of gold on the chance of the game to which he stood nearest;—the most amiable of voluptuaries—the gayest and best-natured of companions—the man that would, of all others, have best sustained his character, had life been a continued banquet, and its only end to enjoy the passing hour, and send it away as pleasantly as might be.

But Kings are least of all exempted from the ordinary lot of humanity; and Seged of Ethiopia is, amongst monarchs, no solitary example of the vanity of reckoning on a day or an hour of undisturbed serenity. An attendant on the Court announced suddenly to their Majesties that a lady, who would only announce herself as a Peeress of England, desired to be admitted into the presence.

The Queen said, hastily, it was *impossible.* No peeress, without announcing her title, was entitled to the privilege of her rank.

"I could be sworn," said a nobleman in attendance, "that it is some whim of the Duchess of Newcastle."

The attendant, who brought the message, said that he did indeed believe it to be the Duchess, both from the singularity of the message, and that the lady spoke with somewhat a foreign accent.

"In the name of madness, then," said the King, "let us admit her. Her Grace is an entire raree-show in her own person—a universal masquerade—indeed a sort of private Bedlam-hospital, her whole ideas being

like so many patients crazed upon the subjects of love and literature, who act nothing in their vagaries, save Minerva, Venus, and the nine Muses."

"Your Majesty's pleasure must always supersede mine," said the Queen. "I only hope I shall not be expected to entertain so fantastic a personage. The last time she came to Court, Isabella,"—(she spoke to one of her Portuguese ladies of honour)—"you had not returned from our lovely Lisbon!—her Grace had the assurance to assume a right to bring a train-bearer into my apartment; and when this was not allowed, what then, think you, she did?—even caused her train to be made so long, that three mortal yards of satin and silver remained in the antechamber, supported by four wenches, while the other end was attached to her Grace's person, as she paid her duty at the upper end of the presence-room. Full thirty yards of the most beautiful silk did her Grace's madness employ in this manner."

"And most beautiful damsels they were who bore this portentous train," said the King—"a train never equalled save by that of the great comet in sixty-six. Sedley and Etherege told us wonders of them; for it is one advantage of this new fashion brought up by the Duchess, that a matron may be totally unconscious of the coquetry of her train and its attendants."

"Am I to understand, then, your Majesty's pleasure is, that the lady is to be admitted?" said the usher.

"Certainly," said the King; "that is, if the incognito be really entitled to the honour.—It may be as

well to inquire her title—there are more mad-women abroad than the Duchess of Newcastle. I will walk into the anteroom myself, and receive your answer."

But ere Charles had reached the lower end of the apartment in his progress to the anteroom, the usher surprised the assembly by announcing a name which had not for many a year been heard in these courtly halls—"the Countess of Derby!"

Stately and tall, and still, at an advanced period of life, having a person unbroken by years, the noble lady advanced towards her Sovereign, with a step resembling that with which she might have met an equal. There was indeed nothing in her manner that indicated either haughtiness or assumption unbecoming that presence; but her consciousness of wrongs, sustained from the administration of Charles, and of the superiority of the injured party over those from whom, or in whose name, the injury had been offered, gave her look dignity, and her step firmness. She was dressed in widow's weeds, of the same fashion which were worn at the time her husband was brought to the scaffold; and which, in the thirty years subsequent to that event, she had never permitted her tire-woman to alter.

The surprise was no pleasing one to the King; and cursing in his heart the rashness which had allowed the lady entrance on the gay scene in which they were engaged, he saw at the same time the necessity of receiving her in a manner suitable to his own character, and her rank in the British Court. He approached her with an air of welcome, into which he threw all his

natural grace, while he began, "*Chère Comptesse de Derby, puissante Reine de Man, notre très auguste sœur*——"

"Speak English, sire, if I may presume to ask such a favour," said the Countess. "I am a Peeress of this nation—mother to one English Earl, and widow, alas, to another! In England I have spent my brief days of happiness, my long years of widowhood and sorrow. France and its language are but to me the dreams of an uninteresting childhood. I know no tongue save that of my husband and my son. Permit me, as the widow and mother of Derby, thus to render my homage."

She would have kneeled, but the King gracefully prevented her, and, saluting her cheek, according to the form, led her towards the Queen, and himself performed the ceremony of introduction. "Your Majesty," he said, "must be informed that the Countess has imposed a restriction on French—the language of gallantry and compliment. I trust your Majesty will, though a foreigner like herself, find enough of honest English to assure the Countess of Derby, with what pleasure we see her at Court, after the absence of so many years."

"I will endeavour to do so at least," said the Queen, on whom the appearance of the Countess of Derby made a more favourable impression than that of many strangers, whom, at the King's request, she was in the habit of receiving with courtesy.

Charles himself again spoke. "To any other lady of the same rank I might put the question, why she was so long absent from the circle? I fear I can only

ask the Countess of Derby, what fortunate cause produces the pleasure of seeing her here?"

"No fortunate cause, my liege, though one most strong and urgent."

The King augured nothing agreeable from this commencement; and in truth, from the Countess's first entrance, he had anticipated some unpleasant explanation, which he therefore hastened to parry, having first composed his features into an expression of sympathy and interest.

"If," said he, "the cause is of a nature in which we can render assistance, we cannot expect your ladyship should enter upon it at the present time; but a memorial addressed to our secretary, or, if it is more satisfactory, to ourselves directly, will receive our immediate, and, I trust I need not add, our favourable construction."

The Countess bowed with some state, and answered, "My business, sire, is indeed important; but so brief, that it need not for more than a few minutes withdraw your ear from what is more pleasing;—yet it is so urgent, that I am afraid to postpone it even for a moment."

"This is unusual," said Charles. "But you, Countess of Derby, are an unwonted guest, and must command my time. Does the matter require my private ear?"

"For my part," said the Countess, "the whole Court might listen; but your Majesty may prefer hearing me in the presence of one or two of your counsellors."

"Ormond," said the King, looking around, "attend

us for an instant,—and do you, Arlington, do the same."

The King led the way into an adjoining cabinet, and, seating himself, requested the Countess would also take a chair. "It needs not, sire," she replied; then pausing for a moment, as if to collect her spirits, she proceeded with firmness.

"Your Majesty well said that no light cause had drawn me from my lonely habitation. I came not hither when the property of my son—that property which descended to him from a father who died for your Majesty's rights—was conjured away from him under pretext of justice, that it might first feed the avarice of the rebel Fairfax, and then supply the prodigality of his son-in-law, Buckingham."

"These are over harsh terms, lady," said the King. "A legal penalty was, as we remember, incurred by an act of irregular violence—so our courts and our laws term it, though personally I have no objection to call it, with you, an honourable revenge. But admit it were such, in prosecution of the laws of honour, bitter legal consequences are often necessarily incurred."

"I come not to argue for my son's wasted and forfeited inheritance, sire," said the Countess; "I only take credit for my patience, under that afflicting dispensation. I now come to redeem the honour of the House of Derby, more dear to me than all the treasures and lands which ever belonged to it."

"And by whom is the honour of the House of

Derby impeached?" said the King; "for on my word you bring me the first news of it."

"Has there one Narrative, as these wild fictions are termed, been printed with regard to the Popish Plot—this pretended Plot, as I will call it—in which the honour of our house has not been touched and tainted? And are there not two noble gentlemen, father and son, allies of the House of Stanley, about to be placed in jeopardy of their lives, on account of matters in which we are the parties first impeached?"

The King looked around, and smiled to Arlington and Ormond. "The Countess's courage, methinks, shames ours. What lips dared have called the immaculate Plot *pretended*, or the Narrative of the witnesses, our preservers from Popish knives, a wild fiction?—But, madam," he said, "though I admire the generosity of your interference in behalf of the two Peverils, I must acquaint you, that your interference is unnecessary—they are this morning acquitted."

"Now may God be praised!" said the Countess, folding her hands. "I have scarce slept since I heard the news of their impeachment; and have arrived here to surrender myself to your Majesty's justice, or to the prejudices of the nation, in hopes, by so doing, I might at least save the lives of my noble and generous friends, enveloped in suspicion only, or chiefly, by their connection with us. Are they indeed acquitted?"

"They are, by my honour," said the King. "I marvel you heard it not."

"I arrived but last night, and remained in the

strictest seclusion," said the Countess, "afraid to make any inquiries that might occasion discovery ere I saw your Majesty."

"And now that we *have* met," said the King, taking her hand kindly—"a meeting which gives me the greatest pleasure—may I recommend to you speedily to return to your royal island with as little eclat as you came hither? The world, my dear Countess, has changed since we were young. Men fought in the Civil War with good swords and muskets; but now we fight with indictments and oaths, and such like legal weapons. You are no adept in such warfare; and though I am well aware you know how to hold out a castle, I doubt much if you have the art to parry off an impeachment. This Plot has come upon us like a land storm—there is no steering the vessel in the teeth of the tempest—we must run for the nearest haven, and happy if we can reach one."

"This is cowardice, my liege," said the Countess—"Forgive the word!—it is but a woman who speaks it. Call your noble friends around you, and make a stand like your royal father. There is but one right and one wrong—one honourable and forward course; and all others which deviate are oblique and unworthy."

"Your language, my venerated friend," said Ormond—who saw the necessity of interfering betwixt the dignity of the actual Sovereign, and the freedom of the Countess, who was generally accustomed to receive not to pay observance—"your language is strong and decided, but it applies not to the times. It might

occasion a renewal of the Civil War, and of all its miseries, but could hardly be attended with the effects you sanguinely anticipate."

"You are too rash, my Lady Countess," said Arlington, "not only to rush upon this danger yourself, but to desire to involve his Majesty. Let me say plainly, that, in this jealous time, you have done but ill to exchange the security of Castle Rushin for the chance of a lodging in the Tower of London."

"And were I to kiss the block there," said the Countess, "as did my husband at Bolton-on-the-Moors, I would do so willingly, rather than forsake a friend! —and one, too, whom, as in the case of the younger Peveril, I have thrust upon danger."

"But have I not assured you that both of the Peverils, elder and younger, are freed from peril?" said the King; "and, my dear Countess, what can else tempt you to thrust *yourself* on danger, from which, doubtless, you expect to be relieved by my intervention? Methinks a lady of your judgment should not voluntarily throw herself into a river, merely that her friends might have the risk and merit of dragging her out."

The Countess reiterated her intention to claim a fair trial.—The two counsellors again pressed their advice that she should withdraw, though under the charge of absconding from justice, and remain in her own feudal kingdom.

The King, seeing no termination to the debate, gently reminded the Countess that her Majesty would be jealous if he detained her ladyship longer, and

offered her his hand to conduct her back to the company. This she was under the necessity of accepting, and returned accordingly to the apartments of state, where an event occurred immediately afterwards, which must be transferred to the next chapter.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-SIXTH.

Here stand I tight and trim,
Quick of eye, though little of limb;
He who denieth the word I have spoken,
Betwixt him and me shall lances be broken.
LAY OF THE LITTLE JOHN DE SAINTRÉ.

WHEN Charles had re-conducted the Countess of Derby into the presence-chamber, before he parted with her, he entreated her, in a whisper, to be governed by good

counsel, and to regard her own safety; and then turned easily from her, as if to distribute his attentions equally among the other guests.

These were a good deal circumscribed at the instant by the arrival of a party of five or six musicians; one of whom, a German, under the patronage of the Duke of Buckingham, was particularly renowned for his performance on the violoncello, but had been detained in inactivity in the antechamber by the non-arrival of his instrument, which had now at length made its appearance.

The domestic who placed it before the owner, shrouded as it was within its wooden case, seemed heartily glad to be rid of his load, and lingered for a moment, as if interested in discovering what sort of instrument was to be produced that could weigh so heavily. His curiosity was satisfied, and in a most extraordinary manner; for, while the musician was fumbling with the key, the case being for his greater convenience placed upright against the wall, the case and instrument itself at once flew open, and out started the dwarf, Geoffrey Hudson,—at sight of whose unearthly appearance, thus suddenly introduced, the ladies shrieked, and ran backwards; the gentlemen started, and the poor German, on seeing the portentous delivery of his fiddle-case, tumbled on the floor in an agony, supposing, it might be, that his instrument was metamorphosed into the strange figure which supplied its place. So soon, however, as he recovered, he glided out of the apartment, and was followed by most of his companions.

"Hudson!" said the King—"My little old friend, I am not sorry to see you; though Buckingham, who I suppose is the purveyor of this jest, hath served us up but a stale one."

"Will your Majesty honour me with one moment's attention?" said Hudson.

"Assuredly, my good friend," said the King. "Old acquaintances are springing up in every quarter to-night; and our leisure can hardly be better employed than in listening to them.—It was an idle trick of Buckingham," he added, in a whisper to Ormond, "to send the poor thing hither, especially as he was to-day tried for the affair of the Plot. At any rate, he comes not to ask protection from us, having had the rare fortune to come off *Plot-free*. He is but fishing, I suppose, for some little present or pension."

The little man, precise in Court etiquette, yet impatient of the King's delaying to attend to him, stood in the midst of the floor, most valorously pawing and prancing, like a Scots pony assuming the airs of a war-horse, waving meanwhile his little hat with the tarnished feather, and bowing from time to time, as if impatient to be heard.

"Speak on, then, my friend," said Charles; "if thou hast some poetical address penned for thee, out with it, that thou mayst have time to repose these flourishing little limbs of thine."

"No poetical speech have I, most mighty sovereign," answered the dwarf; "but, in plain and most loyal

prose, I do accuse, before this company, the once noble Duke of Buckingham of high treason!"

"Well spoken, and manfully—Get on, man," said the King, who never doubted that this was the introduction to something burlesque or witty, not conceiving that the charge was made in solemn earnest.

A great laugh took place among such courtiers as heard, and among many who did not hear, what was uttered by the dwarf; the former entertained by the extravagant emphasis and gesticulation of the little champion, and the others laughing not the less loud that they laughed for example's sake, and upon trust.

"What matter is there for all this mirth?" said he, very indignantly—"Is it fit subject for laughing, that I, Geoffrey Hudson, Knight, do, before King and nobles, impeach George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, of high treason?"

"No subject of mirth, certainly," said Charles, composing his features; "but great matter of wonder.—Come, cease this mouthing, and prancing, and mummery.—If there be a jest, come out with it, man; and if not, even get thee to the beauffet, and drink a cup of wine to refresh thee after thy close lodging."

"I tell you, my liege," said Hudson impatiently, yet in a whisper, intended only to be audible by the King, "that if you spend over much time in trifling, you will be convinced by dire experience of Buckingham's treason. I tell you,—I asseverate to your Majesty,—two hundred armed fanatics will be here within the hour to surprise the guards."

"Stand back, ladies," said the King, "or you may hear more than you will care to listen to. My Lord of Buckingham's jests are not always, you know, quite fitted for female ears; besides, we want a few words in private with our little friend. You, my Lord of Ormond—you, Arlington" (and he named one or two others), "may remain with us."

The gay crowd bore back, and dispersed through the apartment—the men to conjecture what the end of this mummery, as they supposed it, was likely to prove; and what jest, as Sedley said, the bass-fiddle had been brought to bed of—and the ladies to admire and criticise the antique dress and richly embroidered ruff and hood of the Countess of Derby, to whom the Queen was shewing particular attention.

"And now, in the name of Heaven, and amongst friends," said the King to the dwarf, "what means all this?"

"Treason, my lord the King!—Treason to his Majesty of England!—When I was chambered in yonder instrument, my lord, the High-Dutch fellows who bore me, carried me into a certain chapel, to see, as they said to each other, that all was ready. Sire, I went where bass-fiddle never went before, even into a conventicle of Fifth-Monarchists; and when they brought me away, the preacher was concluding his sermon, and was within a 'Now to apply' of setting off like the bell-weather at the head of his flock, to surprise your Majesty in your royal Court! I heard him through the sound-holes of my instrument, when the

fellow set me down for a moment to profit by this precious doctrine."

"It would be singular," said Lord Arlington, "were there some reality at the bottom of this buffoonery; for we know these wild men have been consulting together to-day, and five conventicles have held a solemn fast."

"Nay," said the King, "if that be the case, they are certainly determined on some villany."

"Might I advise," said the Duke of Ormond, "I would summon the Duke of Buckingham to this presence. His connections with the fanatics are well known, though he affects to conceal them."

"You would not, my lord, do his Grace the injustice to treat him as a criminal on such a charge as this?" said the King. "However," he added, after a moment's consideration, "Buckingham is accessible to every sort of temptation, from the flightiness of his genius. I should not be surprised if he nourished hopes of an aspiring kind—I think we had some proof of it but lately.—Hark ye, Chiffinch; go to him instantly, and bring him here on any fair pretext thou canst devise. I would fain save him from what lawyers call an overt act. The Court would be dull as a dead horse, were Buckingham to miscarry."

"Will not your Majesty order the Horse Guards to turn out?" said young Selby, who was present, and an officer.

"No, Selby," said the King, "I like not horse-play. But let them be prepared; and let the High Bailiff

collect his civil officers, and command the Sheriffs to summon their worshipful attendants, from javelin-men to hangmen,* and have them in readiness, in case of any sudden tumult—double the sentinels on the doors of the palace—and see no strangers get in."

"Or *out*," said the Duke of Ormond. "Where are the foreign fellows who brought in the dwarf?"

They were sought for, but they were not to be found. They had retreated, leaving their instruments —a circumstance which seemed to bear hard on the Duke of Buckingham, their patron.

Hasty preparations were made to provide resistance to any effort of despair which the supposed conspirators might be driven to; and in the meanwhile, the King, withdrawing with Arlington, Ormond, and a few other counsellors, into the cabinet where the Countess of Derby had had her audience, resumed the examination of the little discoverer. His declaration, though singular, was quite coherent; the strain of romance intermingled with it, being in fact a part of his character, which often gained him the fate of being laughed at, when he would otherwise have been pitied, or even esteemed.

He commenced with a flourish about his sufferings for the Plot, which the impatience of Ormond would have cut short, had not the King reminded his Grace, that a top, when it is not flogged, must needs go down of itself at the end of a definite time, while the application of the whip may keep it up for hours.

* Note E. The Sheriff of London.

Geoffrey Hudson was, therefore, allowed to exhaust himself on the subject of his prison-house, which he informed the King was not without a beam of light—an emanation of loveliness—a mortal angel—quick of step and beautiful of eye, who had more than once visited his confinement with words of cheering and comfort.

"By my faith," said the King, "they fare better in Newgate than I was aware of. Who would have thought of the little gentleman being solaced with female society in such a place?"

"I pray your Majesty," said the dwarf, after the manner of a solemn protest, "to understand nothing amiss. My devotion to this fair creature is rather like what we poor Catholics pay to the blessed saints, than mixed with any grosser quality. Indeed, she seems rather a sylphid of the Rosicrucian system, than aught more carnal; being slighter, lighter, and less than the females of common life, who have something of that coarseness of make which is doubtless derived from the sinful and gigantic race of the antediluvians."

"Well, say on, man," quoth Charles. "Didst thou not discover this sylph to be a mere mortal wench after all?"

"Who?—I, my liege?—O fie!"

"Nay, little gentleman, do not be so particularly scandalized," said the King; "I promise you I suspect you of no audacity of gallantry."

"Time wears fast," said the Duke of Ormond, impatiently, and looking at his watch. "Chiffinch

hath been gone ten minutes, and ten minutes will bring him back."

"True," said Charles, gravely. "Come to the point, Hudson; and tell us what this female has to do with your coming hither in this extraordinary manner."

"Every thing, my lord," said little Hudson. "I saw her twice during my confinement in Newgate, and, in my thought, she is the very angel who guards my life and welfare; for, after my acquittal, as I walked towards the city with two tall gentlemen, who had been in trouble along with me, and just while we stood to our defence against a rascally mob, and just as I had taken possession of an elevated situation to have some vantage against the great odds of numbers, I heard a heavenly voice sound, as it were, from a window behind me, counselling me to take refuge in a certain house; to which measure I readily persuaded my gallant friends the Peverils, who have always shewn themselves willing to be counselled by me."

"Shewing therein their wisdom at once and modesty," said the King. "But what chanced next? Be brief—be like thyself, man."

"For a time, sire," said the dwarf, "it seemed as if I were not the principal object of attention. First, the younger Peveril was withdrawn from us by a gentleman of venerable appearance, though something smacking of a Puritan, having boots of neat's leather, and wearing his weapon without a sword-knot. When Master Julian returned, he informed us for the first time, that we were in the power of a body of armed fanatics, who

were, as the poet says, prompt for direful act. And your Majesty will remark, that both father and son were in some measure desperate, and disregardful from that moment of the assurances which I gave them, that the star which I was bound to worship, would, in her own time, shine forth in signal of our safety. May it please your Majesty, in answer to my hilarious exhortations to confidence, the father did but say *tush*, and the son *pshaw*, which shewed how men's prudence and manners are disturbed by affliction. Nevertheless, these two gentlemen, the Peverils, forming a strong opinion of the necessity there was to break forth, were it only to convey a knowledge of these dangerous passages to your Majesty, commenced an assault on the door of the apartment, I also assisting with the strength which Heaven hath given, and some threescore years have left me. We could not, as it unhappily proved, manage our attempt so silently, but that our guards overheard us, and, entering in numbers, separated us from each other, and compelled my companions, at point of pike and poniard, to go to some other and more distant apartment, thus separating our fair society. I was again enclosed in the now solitary chamber, and I will own that I felt a certain depression of soul. But when bale is at highest, as the poet singeth, boot is at nighest, for a door of hope was suddenly opened——"

"In the name of God, my liege," said the Duke of Ormond, "let this poor creature's story be translated into the language of common sense by some of the

scribblers of romances about Court, and we may be able to make meaning of it."

Geoffrey Hudson looked with a frowning countenance of reproof upon the impatient old Irish nobleman, and said, with a very dignified air, "That one duke upon a poor gentleman's hand was enough at a time, and that, but for his present engagement and dependency with the Duke of Buckingham, he would have endured no such terms from the Duke of Ormond."

"Abate your valour, and diminish your choler, at our request, most puissant Sir Geoffrey Hudson," said the King; "and forgive the Duke of Ormond for my sake; but at all events go on with your story."

Geoffrey Hudson laid his hand on his bosom, and bowed in proud and dignified submission to his Sovereign; then waved his forgiveness gracefully to Ormond, accompanied with a horrible grin, which he designed for a smile of gracious forgiveness and conciliation. "Under the Duke's favour, then," he proceeded, "when I said a door of hope was opened to me, I meant a door behind the tapestry, from whence issued that fair vision—yet not so fair as lustrously dark, like the beauty of a continental night, where the cloudless azure sky shrouds us in a veil more lovely than that of day! —But I note your Majesty's impatience;—enough. I followed my beautiful guide into an apartment, where there lay, strangely intermingled, warlike arms and musical instruments. Amongst these I saw my own late place of temporary obscurity—a violoncello. To my astonishment, she turned around the instrument,

and opening it behind by pressure of a spring, showed that it was filled with pistols, daggers, and ammunition made up in bandoleers. 'These,' she said, 'are this night destined to surprise the Court of the unwary Charles'—your Majesty must pardon my using her own words; 'but if thou darest go in their stead, thou mayst be the saviour of king and kingdoms; if thou art afraid, keep secret, I will myself try the adventure.' Now, may Heaven forbid, that Geoffrey Hudson were craven enough, said I, to let thee run such a risk! You know not—you cannot know, what belongs to such ambuscades and concealments—I am accustomed to them—have lurked in the pocket of a giant, and have formed the contents of a pasty. 'Get in, then,' she said, 'and lose no time.' Nevertheless, while I prepared to obey, I will not deny that some cold apprehensions came over my hot valour, and I confessed to her, if it might so be, I would rather find my way to the palace on my own feet. But she would not listen to me, saying hastily, 'I would be intercepted, or refused admittance, and that I must embrace the means she offered me of introduction into the presence, and when there, tell the King to be on his guard—little more is necessary; for once the scheme is known, it becomes desperate. Rashly and boldly, I bid adieu to the daylight which was then fading away. She withdrew the contents of the instrument destined for my concealment, and having put them behind the chimney-board, introduced me in their room. As she clasped me in, I implored her to warn the men who were to be intrusted with me, to take heed and keep the

neck of the violoncello uppermost; but ere I had completed my request, I found I was left alone, and in darkness. Presently, two or three fellows entered, whom, by their language, which I in some sort understood, I perceived to be Germans, and under the influence of the Duke of Buckingham. I heard them receive from the leader a charge how they were to deport themselves, when they should assume the concealed arms—and—for I will do the Duke no wrong—I understood their orders were precise, not only to spare the person of the King, but also those of the courtiers, and to protect all who might be in the presence against an irruption of the fanatics. In other respects, they had charge to disarm the gentlemen-pensioners in the guard-room, and, in fine, to obtain the command of the Court."

The King looked disconcerted and thoughtful at this communication, and bade Lord Arlington see that Selby quietly made search into the contents of the other cases which had been brought as containing musical instruments. He then signed to the dwarf to proceed in his story, asking him again and again, and very solemnly, whether he was sure that he heard the Duke's name mentioned, as commanding or approving this action.

The dwarf answered in the affirmative.

"This," said the King," is carrying the frolic somewhat far."

The dwarf proceeded to state, that he was carried after his metamorphosis into the chapel, where he heard the preacher seemingly about the close of his harangue,

the tenor of which he also mentioned. Words, he said, could not express the agony which he felt when he found that his bearer, in placing the instrument in a corner, was about to invert its position, in which case, he said, human frailty might have proved too great for love, for loyalty, for true obedience, nay, for the fear of death, which was like to ensue on discovery; and he concluded, that he greatly doubted he could not have stood on his head for many minutes without screaming aloud.

"I could not have blamed you," said the King; "placed in such a posture in the royal oak, I must needs have roared myself.—Is this all you have to tell us of this strange conspiracy?" Sir Geoffrey Hudson replied in the affirmative, and the King presently subjoined—"Go, my little friend, your services shall not be forgotten. Since thou hast crept into the bowels of a fiddle for our service, we are bound, in duty and conscience, to find you a more roomy dwelling in future."

"It was a violoncello, if your Majesty is pleased to remember," said the little jealous man, "not a common fiddle; though, for your Majesty's service, I would have crept even into a kit."

"Whatever of that nature could have been performed by any subject of ours, thou wouldst have enacted in our behalf—of that we hold ourselves certain. Withdraw for a little; and hark ye, for the present, beware what you say about this matter. Let your appearance be considered—do you mark me—as a

frolic of the Duke of Buckingham; and not a word of conspiracy."

"Were it not better to put him under some restraint, sire?" said the Duke of Ormond, when Hudson had left the room.

"It is unnecessary," said the King. "I remember the little wretch of old. Fortune, to make him the model of absurdity, has closed a most lofty soul within that little miserable carcass. For wielding his sword and keeping his word he is a perfect Don Quixote in decimo-octavo. He shall be taken care of.—But, odds-fish, my lords, is not this freak of Buckingham too villanous and ungrateful?"

"He had not had the means of being so, had your Majesty," said the Duke of Ormond, "been less lenient on other occasions."

"My lord, my lord," said Charles, hastily—"your lordship is Buckingham's known enemy—we will take other and more impartial counsel.—Arlington, what think you of all this?"

"May it please your Majesty," said Arlington, "I think the thing is absolutely impossible, unless the Duke has had some quarrel with your Majesty, of which we know nothing. His Grace is very flighty, doubtless, but this seems actual insanity."

"Why, faith," said the King, "some words passed betwixt us this morning—His Duchess it seems is dead—and to lose no time, his Grace had cast his eyes about for means of repairing the loss, and had the assurance to ask our consent to woo my niece Lady Anne."

"Which your Majesty of course rejected?" said the statesman.

"And not without rebuking his assurance," added the King.

"In private, sire, or before any witnesses?" said the Duke of Ormond.

"Before no one," said the King,—"excepting, indeed, little Chiffinch; and he, you know, is no one."

"*Hinc illæ lachrymæ,*" said Ormond. "I know his Grace well. While the rebuke of his aspiring petulance was a matter betwixt your Majesty and him, he might have let it pass by; but a check before a fellow from whom it was likely enough to travel through the Court, was a matter to be revenged."

Here Selby came hastily from the other room, to say, that his Grace of Buckingham had just entered the presence chamber.

The King rose. "Let a boat be in readiness, with a party of the yeomen," said he. "It may be necessary to attach him of treason, and send him to the Tower."

"Should not a Secretary of State's warrant be prepared?" said Ormond.

"No, my Lord Duke," said the King, sharply. "I still hope that the necessity may be avoided."

CHAPTER THE FORTY-SEVENTH.

High reaching Buckingham grows circumspect.
RICHARD III.

BEFORE giving the reader an account of the meeting betwixt Buckingham and his injured Sovereign, we may mention a trifling circumstance or two which took place betwixt his Grace and Chiffinch, in the short drive betwixt York-Place and Whitehall.

In the outset, the Duke endeavoured to learn from the courtier the special cause of his being summoned so hastily to the Court. Chiffinch answered, cautiously, that he believed there were some gambols going forward, at which the King desired the Duke's presence.

This did not quite satisfy Buckingham, for, conscious of his own rash purpose, he could not but apprehend discovery. After a moment's silence, "Chiffinch," he said, abruptly, "did you mention to any one what the King said to me this morning touching the Lady Anne?"

"My Lord Duke," said Chiffinch, hesitating, "surely my duty to the King—my respect to your Grace——"

"You mentioned it to no one, then?" said the Duke, sternly.

"To no one," replied Chiffinch, faintly, for he was intimidated by the Duke's increasing severity of manner.

"Ye lie, like a scoundrel!" said the Duke—"You told Christian!"

"Your Grace," said Chiffinch—"your Grace—your Grace ought to remember that I told you Christian's secret; that the Countess of Derby was come up."

"And you think the one point of treachery may balance for the other? But no. I must have a better atonement. Be assured I will blow your brains out, ere you leave this carriage, unless you tell me the truth of this message from Court."

As Chiffinch hesitated what reply to make, a man, who, by the blaze of the torches, then always borne, as

well by the lackeys who hung behind the carriage, as by the footmen who ran by the side, might easily see who sat in the coach, approached, and sung in a deep manly voice, the burden of an old French song on the battle of Marignan, in which is imitated the German French of the defeated Swiss.

Tout est verlore
La tintelore,
Tout est verlore
Bei Got.

"I am betrayed," said the Duke, who instantly conceived that this chorus, expressing "all is lost," was sung by one of his faithful agents, as a hint to him that their machinations were discovered.

He attempted to throw himself from the carriage, but Chiffinch, held him with a firm, though respectful grasp. "Do not destroy yourself, my, lord," he said, in a tone of deep humility—"there are soldiers and officers of the peace around the carriage, to enforce your Grace's coming to Whitehall, and to prevent your escape. To attempt it would be to confess guilt; and I advise you strongly against that—the King is your friend—be your own."

The Duke, after a moment's consideration, said sullenly, "I believe you are right. Why should I fly, when I am guilty of nothing but sending some fireworks to entertain the Court, instead of a concert of music?"

"And the dwarf, who came so unexpectedly out of the bass-viol——"

"Was a masking device of my own, Chiffinch," said

the Duke, though the circumstance was then first known to him. "Chiffinch, you will bind me for ever, if you will permit me to have a minute's conversation with Christian."

"With Christian, my lord?—Where could you find him?—You are aware we must go straight on to the Court."

"True," said the Duke, "but I think I cannot miss finding him; and you, Master Chiffinch, are no officer, and have no warrant either to detain me prisoner, or prevent my speaking to whom I please."

Chiffinch replied, "My Lord Duke, your genius is so great, and your escapes so numerous, that it will be from no wish of my own if I am forced to hurt a man so skilful and so popular."

"Nay, then, there is life in it yet," said the Duke, and whistled; when, from beside the little cutler's booth, with which the reader is acquainted, appeared, suddenly, Master Christian, and was in a moment at the side of the coach. "*Ganz ist verloren,*" said the Duke.

"I know it," said Christian; "and all our godly friends are dispersed upon the news. Lucky the Colonel and these German rascals gave a hint. All is safe —You go to Court.—Hark ye, I will follow."

"You, Christian? that would be more friendly than wise."

"Why, what is there against me?" said Christian. "I am innocent as the child unborn—so is your Grace. There is but one creature who can bear witness to our

guilt; but I trust to bring her on the stage in our favour—besides, if I went not, I should presently be sent for."

"The familiar of whom I have heard you speak, I warrant?"

"Hark in your ear again."

"I understand," said the Duke, "and will delay Master Chiffinch,—for he, you must know, is my conductor,—no longer.—Well, Chiffinch, let them drive on.—*Vogue la Galere!*" he exclaimed, as the carriage went onward; "I have sailed through worse perils than this yet."

"It is not for me to judge," said Chiffinch; "your Grace is a bold commander; and Christian hath the cunning of the devil for a pilot; but——However, I remain your Grace's poor friend, and will heartily rejoice in your extrication."

"Give me a proof of your friendship," said the Duke. "Tell me what you know of Christian's familiar, as he calls her."

"I believe it to be the same dancing wench who came with Empson to my house on the morning that Mistress Alice made her escape from us. But you have seen her, my lord?"

"I?" said the Duke; "when did I see her?"

"She was employed by Christian, I believe, to set his niece at liberty, when he found himself obliged to gratify his fanatical brother-in-law, by restoring his child; besides being prompted by a private desire, as I think, of bantering your Grace."

"Umph! I suspected so much. I will repay it," said the Duke. "But first to get out of this dilemma. —That little Numidian witch, then, was his familiar; and she joined in the plot to tantalize me?—But here we reach Whitehall.—Now, Chiffinch, be no worse than thy word, and—now, Buckingham, be thyself!"

But ere we follow Buckingham into the presence, where he had so difficult a part to sustain, it may not be amiss to follow Christian after his brief conversation with him. On re-entering the house, which he did by a circuitous passage, leading from a distant alley, and through several courts, Christian hastened to a low matted apartment, in which Bridgenorth sat alone, reading the Bible by the light of a small brazen lamp, with the utmost serenity of countenance.

"Have you dismissed the Peverils?" said Christian, hastily.

"I have," said the Major.

"And upon what pledge—that they will not carry information against you to Whitehall?"

"They gave me their promise voluntarily, when I shewed them our armed friends were dismissed. To-morrow, I believe, it is their purpose to lodge informations."

"And why not to-night, I pray you?" said Christian.

"Because they allow us that time for escape."

"Why, then, do you not avail yourself of it? Wherefore are you here?" said Christian.

"Nay, rather, why do *you* not fly?" said Bridgenorth. "Of a surety, you are as deeply engaged as I."

"Brother Bridgenorth, I am the fox, who knows a hundred modes of deceiving the hounds; you are the deer, whose sole resource is in hasty flight. Therefore lose no time—begone to the country—or rather, Zedekiah Fish's vessel, the Good Hope, lies in the river, bound for Massachusetts—take the wings of the morning, and begone—she can fall down to Gravesend with the tide."

"And leave to thee, brother Christian," said Bridgenorth, "the charge of my fortune and my daughter? No, brother; my opinion of your good faith must be re-established ere I again trust thee."

"Go thy ways, then, for a suspicious fool," said Christian, suppressing his strong desire to use language more offensive; "or rather stay where thou art, and take thy chance of the gallows!"

"It is appointed to all men to die once," said Bridgenorth; "my life hath been a living death. My fairest boughs have been stripped by the axe of the forester—that which survives must, if it shall blossom, be grafted elsewhere, and at a distance from my aged trunk. The sooner, then, the root feels the axe, the stroke is more welcome. I had been pleased, indeed, had I been called to bringing yonder licentious Court to a purer character, and relieving the yoke of the suffering people of God. That youth too—son to that precious woman, to whom I owe the last tie that feebly links my wearied spirit to humanity—could I have travailed with *him* in the good cause!—But that with all my other hopes, is broken for ever; and since I am not worthy to be an

instrument in so great a work, I have little desire to abide longer in this vale of sorrow."

"Farewell, then, desponding fool!" said Christian, unable, with all his calmness, any longer to suppress his contempt for the resigned and hopeless predestinarian. "That fate should have clogged me with such confederates!" he muttered, as he left the apartment —"this bigoted fool is now nearly irreclaimable—I must to Zarah; for she, or no one, must carry us through these straits. If I can but soothe her sullen temper, and excite her vanity to action,—betwixt her address, the King's partiality for the Duke, Buckingham's matchless effrontery, and my own hand upon the helm, we may yet weather the tempest that darkens around us. But what we do must be hastily done."

In another apartment he found the person he sought —the same who visited the Duke of Buckingham's harem, and, having relieved Alice Bridgenorth from her confinement there, had occupied her place as has been already narrated, or rather intimated. She was now much more plainly attired than when she had tantalized the Duke with her presence; but her dress had still something of the Oriental character, which corresponded with the dark complexion and quick eye of the wearer. She had the kerchief at her eyes as Christian entered the apartment, but suddenly withdrew it, and, flashing on him a glance of scorn and indignation, asked him what he meant by intruding where his company was alike unsought for and undesired.

"A proper question," said Christian, "from a slave to her master!"

"Rather say, a proper question, and of all questions the most proper, from a mistress to her slave! Know you not, that from the hour in which you discovered your ineffable baseness, you have made me mistress of your lot? While you seemed but a demon of vengeance, you commanded terror, and to good purpose; but such a foul fiend as thou hast of late shewn thyself—such a very worthless, base trickster of the devil—such a sordid grovelling imp of perdition, can gain nothing but scorn from a soul like mine."

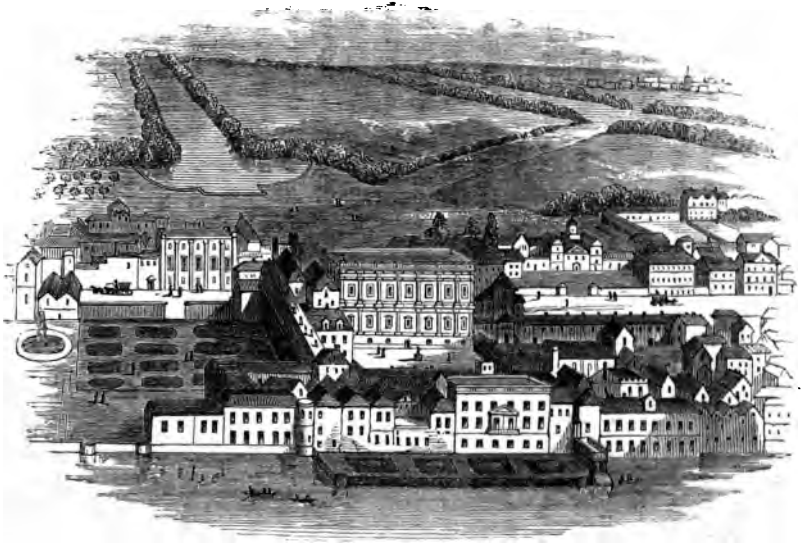
"Gallantly mouthed," said Christian, "and with good emphasis."

"Yes," answered Zarah "I can speak—sometimes—I can also be mute; and that no one knows better than thou."

"Thou art a spoiled child, Zarah, and dost but abuse the indulgence I entertain for your freakish humour," replied Christian; "thy wits have been disturbed since ever you landed in England, and all for the sake of one who cares for thee no more than for the most worthless object who walks the streets, amongst whom he left you to engage in a brawl for one he loved better."

"It is no matter," said Zarah, obviously repressing very bitter emotion; "it signifies not that he loves another better; there is none—no, none—that ever did, or can, love him so well."

"I pity you, Zarah!" said Christian, with some scorn.



"I deserve your pity," she replied, "were your pity worth my accepting. Whom have I to thank for my wretchedness but you?—You bred me up in thirst of vengeance, ere I knew that good and evil were anything better than names;—to gain your applause, and to gratify the vanity you had excited, I have for years undergone a penance, from which a thousand would have shrunk."

"A thousand, Zarah!" answered Christian; "ay, a hundred thousand, and a million to boot; the creature is not on earth, being mere mortal woman, that would have undergone the thirtieth part of thy self-denial."

"I believe it," said Zarah, drawing up her slight but elegant figure; "I believe it—I have gone through a trial that few indeed could have sustained. I have renounced the dear intercourse of my kind; compelled my tongue only to utter, like that of a spy, the knowledge which my ear had only collected as a base eavesdropper. This I have done for years—for years—and all for the sake of your private applause—and the hope of vengeance on a woman, who, if she did ill in murdering my father, has been bitterly repaid by nourishing a serpent in her bosom, that had the tooth, but not the deafened ear, of the adder."

"Well—well—well," reiterated Christian; "and had you not your reward in my approbation—in the consciousness of your own unequalled dexterity—by which, superior to anything of thy sex that history has ever known, you endured what woman never before

endured, insolence without notice, admiration without answer, and sarcasm without reply?"

"Not without reply!" said Zarah, fiercely. "Gave not Nature to my feelings a course of expression more impressive than words? and did not those tremble at my shrieks, who would have little minded my entreaties or my complaints? And my proud lady, who sauced her charities with the taunts she thought I heard not—she was justly paid by the passing of her dearest and most secret concerns into the hands of her mortal enemy; and the vain Earl—yet he was a thing as insignificant as the plume that nodded in his cap; and the maidens and ladies who taunted me—I had, or can easily have, my revenge upon them. But there is *one*," she added, looking upward, "who never taunted me; one whose generous feelings could treat the poor dumb girl even as his sister; who never spoke word of her but it was to excuse or defend—and you tell me I must not love him, and that it is madness to love him!—I *will* be mad then, for I will love him till the latest breath of my life!"

"Think but an instant, silly girl—silly but in one respect, since in all others thou mayest brave the world of women. Think what I have proposed to thee, for the loss of this hopeless affection, a career so brilliant!—Think only that it rests with thyself to be the wife—the wedded wife—of the princely Buckingham! With my talents—with thy wit and beauty—with his passionate love of these attributes—a short space might rank you among England's princesses.—Be but guided

by me—he is now at a deadly pass—needs every assistance to retrieve his fortunes—above all, that which we alone can render him. Put yourself under my conduct, and not fate itself shall prevent your wearing a Duchess's coronet."

"A coronet of thistle-down, entwined with thistle-leaves," said Zarah.—"I know not a slighter thing than your Buckingham! I saw him at your request—saw him when, as a man, he should have shewn himself generous and noble—I stood the proof at your desire, for I laugh at those dangers from which the poor blushing wailers of my sex shrink and withdraw themselves. What did I find him?—a poor wavering voluptuary—his nearest attempt to passion like the fire on a wretched stubble-field, that may singe, indeed, or smoke, but can neither warm nor devour. Christian! were his coronet at my feet this moment, I would sooner take up a crown of gilded gingerbread, than extend my hand to raise it."

"You are mad, Zarah—with all your taste and talent, you are utterly mad! But let Buckingham pass—Do you owe *me* nothing on this emergency?—Nothing to one who rescued you from the cruelty of your owner, the posture-master, to place you in ease and affluence?"

"Christian," she replied, "I owe you much. Had I not felt I did so, I would, as I have been often tempted to do, have denounced thee to the fierce Countess, who would have gibbeted you on her feudal walls of Castle-Rushin, and bid your family seek re-

dress from the eagles, that would long since have thatched their nest with your hair, and fed their young ospreys with your flesh."

"I am truly glad you have had so much forbearance for me," answered Christian.

"I have it in truth and in sincerity," replied Zarah—"Not for your benefits to me—such as they were, they were every one interested, and conferred from the most selfish considerations. I have overpaid them a thousand times by the devotion to your will, which I have displayed at the greatest personal risk. But till of late, I respected your powers of mind—your inimitable command of passion—the force of intellect which I have ever seen you exercise over all others, from the bigot Bridgenorth to the debauched Buckingham—in that, indeed, I have recognized my master."

"And those powers," said Christian, "are unlimited as ever; and with thy assistance, thou shalt see the strongest meshes that the laws of civil society ever wove to limit the natural dignity of man, broke asunder like a spider's web."

She paused, and answered, "While a noble motive fired thee—ay, a noble motive, though irregular—for I was born to gaze on the sun which the pale daughters of Europe shrink from—I could serve thee—I could have followed, while revenge or ambition had guided thee—but love of *wealth*, and by what means acquired! —What sympathy can I hold with that?—Wouldst thou not have pandered to the lust of the King, though the object was thine own orphan niece?—You smile?—

Smile again when I ask you whether you meant not my own prostitution, when you charged me to remain in the house of that wretched Buckingham?—Smile at that question, and by Heaven I stab you to the heart!" And she thrust her hand into her bosom, and partly showed the hilt of a small poniard.

"And if I smile," said Christian, "it is but in scorn of so odious an accusation. Girl, I will not tell thee the reason, but there exists not on earth the living thing over whose safety and honour I would keep watch as over thine. Buckingham's wife, indeed, I wished thee; and through thy own beauty and thy wit, I doubted not to bring the match to pass."

"Vain flatterer," said Zarah, yet seeming soothed even by the flattery which she scoffed at, "you would persuade me that it was honourable love which you expected the Duke was to have offered me. How durst you urge so gross a deception, to which time, place, and circumstance, gave the lie?—How dare you now again mention it, when you well know, that at the time you mention, the Duchess was still in life?"

"In life, but on her deathbed," said Christian; "and for time, place, and circumstance, had your virtue, my Zarah, depended on these, how couldst thou have been the creature thou art? I knew thee all sufficient to bid him defiance—else—for thou art dearer to me than thou thinkest—I had not risked thee to win the Duke of Buckingham; ay, and the kingdom of England to boot.—So now, wilt thou be ruled and go on with me?"

Zarah, or Fenella, for our readers must have been

long aware of the identity of these two personages, cast down her eyes, and was silent for a long time. "Christian," she said at last, in a solemn voice, "if my ideas of right and of wrong be wild and incoherent, I owe it, first, to the wild fever which my native sun communicated to my veins; next, to my childhood, trained amidst the shifts, tricks, and feats of jugglers and mountebanks; and then, to a youth of fraud and deception, through the course thou didst prescribe me, in which I might, indeed, hear every thing, but communicate with no one. The last cause of my wild errors, if such they are, originates, O Christian, with you alone; by whose intrigues I was placed with yonder lady, and who taught me, that to revenge my father's death, was my first great duty on earth, and that I was bound by nature to hate and injure her by whom I was fed and fostered, though as she would have fed and caressed a dog, or any other mute animal. I also think—for I will deal fairly with you—that you had not so easily detected your niece, in the child whose surprising agility was making yonder brutal mountebank's fortune; nor so readily induced him to part with his bond-slave, had you not, for your own purposes, placed me under his charge, and reserved the privilege of claiming me when you pleased. I could not, under any other tuition, have identified myself with the personage of a mute, which it has been your desire that I should perform through life."

"You do me injustice, Zarah," said Christian—"I found you capable of discharging, to an uncommon

degree, a task necessary to the avenging of your father's death—I consecrated you to it, as I consecrated my own life and hopes; and you held the duty sacred, till these mad feelings towards a youth who loves your cousin——"

"Who—loves—my—cousin," repeated Zarah (for we will continue to call her by her real name), slowly, and as if the words dropped unconsciously from her lips. "Well—be it so!—Man of many wiles, I will follow thy course for a little, a very little farther; but take heed—tease me not with remonstrances against the treasure of my secret thoughts—I mean my most hopeless affection to Julian Peveril—and bring me not as an assistant to any snare which you may design to cast around him. You and your Duke shall rue the hour most bitterly, in which you provoke me. You may suppose you have me in your power; but remember, the snakes of my burning climate are never so fatal as when you grasp them."

"I care not for these Peverils," said Christian—"I care not for their fate a poor straw, unless where it bears on that of the destined woman whose hands are red in your father's blood. Believe me, I can divide her fate and theirs. I will explain to you how. And for the Duke, he may pass among men of the town for wit, and among soldiers for valour, among courtiers for manners and for form; and why, with his high rank and immense fortune, you should throw away an opportunity, which, as I could now improve it——"

"Speak not of it," said Zarah, "if thou wouldst

have our truce—remember it is no peace—if, I say, thou wouldst have our truce grow to be an hour old!"

"This, then," said Christian, with a last effort to work upon the vanity of this singular being, "is she who pretended such superiority to human passion, that she could walk indifferently and unmoved through the halls of the prosperous, and the prison cells of the captive, unknowing and unknown—sympathizing neither with the pleasures of the one, nor the woes of the other, but advancing with sure, though silent steps, her own plans, in despite and regardless of either!"

"My own plans!" said Zarah—"*Thy* plans, Christian—thy plans of extorting from the surprised prisoners, means whereby to convict them—thine own plans, formed with those more powerful than thyself, to sound men's secrets, and, by using them as a matter of accusation, to keep up the great delusion of the nation."

"Such access was indeed given you as my agent," said Christian, "and for advancing a great national change. But how did you use it?—to advance your insane passion."

"Insane!" said Zarah—"Had he been less than insane whom I addressed, he and I had ere now been far from the toils which you have pitched for us both. I had means prepared for everything; and ere this, the shores of Britain had been lost to our sight for ever."

"The dwarf, too," said Christian—"Was it worthy of you to delude that poor creature with flattering visions—lull him asleep with drugs? Was *that* my doing?"

"He was my destined tool," said Zarah, haughtily. "I remembered your lessons too well not to use him as such. Yet scorn him not too much. I tell you, that yon very miserable dwarf, whom I made my sport in the prison,—yon wretched abortion of nature, I would select for a husband, ere I would marry your Buckingham;—the vain and imbecile pigmy has yet the warm heart and noble feelings, that a man should hold his highest honour."

"In God's name, then, take your own way," said Christian; "and, for my sake, let never man hereafter limit a woman in the use of her tongue, since he must make it amply up to her, in allowing her the privilege of her own will. Who would have thought it? But the colt has slipped the bridle, and I must needs follow, since I cannot guide her."

Our narrative returns to the Court of King Charles, at Whitehall.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-EIGHTH.

——— But O!
What shall I say to thee, Lord Scroop; thou cruel,
Ingrateful, savage, and inhuman creature!
Thou that didst bear the key of all my counsels,
That knew'st the very bottom of my soul,
That almost mightst have coined me into gold,
Wouldst thou have practised on me for thy use? HENRY V.

AT no period of his life, not even when that life was in imminent danger, did the constitutional gaiety of

Charles seem more overclouded, than when waiting for the return of Chiffinch with the Duke of Buckingham. His mind revolted at the idea, that the person to whom he had been so particularly indulgent, and whom he had selected as the friend of his lighter hours and amusements, should prove capable of having tampered with a plot apparently directed against his liberty and life. He more than once examined the dwarf anew, but could extract nothing more than his first narrative contained. The apparition of the female to him in the cell of Newgate, he described in such fanciful and romantic colours, that the King could not help thinking the poor man's head a little turned; and, as nothing was found in the kettledrum, and other musical instruments brought for the use of the Duke's band of foreigners, he nourished some slight hope that the whole plan might be either a mere jest, or that the idea of an actual conspiracy was founded in mistake.

The persons who had been despatched to watch the motions of Mr. Weiver's congregation, brought back word that they had quietly dispersed. It was known, at the same time, that they had met in arms, but this augured no particular design of aggression, at a time when all true Protestants conceived themselves in danger of immediate massacre; when the fathers of the city had repeatedly called out the Train-Bands, and alarmed the citizens of London, under the idea of an instant insurrection of the Catholics; and when, to sum the whole up, in the emphatic words of an alderman of the day, there was a general belief that they would

all waken some unhappy morning with their throats cut. Who was to do these dire deeds, it was more difficult to suppose; but all admitted the possibility that they might be achieved, since one Justice of the Peace was already murdered. There was, therefore, no inference of hostile intentions against the State, to be decidedly derived from a congregation of Protestants *par excellence*, military from old associations, bringing their arms with them to a place of worship, in the midst of a panic so universal.

Neither did the violent language of the minister, supposing that to be proved, absolutely infer meditated violence. The favourite parables of the preachers, and the metaphors and ornaments which they selected, were at all times of a military cast; and the taking the kingdom of heaven by storm, a strong and beautiful metaphor, when used generally, as in Scripture, was detailed in their sermons in all the technical language of the attack and defence of a fortified place. The danger, in short, whatever might have been its actual degree, had disappeared as suddenly as a bubble upon the water, when broken by a casual touch, and had left as little trace behind it. It became, therefore, matter of much doubt, whether it had ever actually existed.

While various reports were making from without, and while their tenor was discussed by the King, and such nobles and statesmen as he thought proper to consult on the occasion, a gradual sadness and anxiety mingled with, and finally silenced, the mirth of the evening. All became sensible that something unusual

was going forward; and the unwonted distance which Charles maintained from his guests, while it added greatly to the dulness that began to predominate in the presence-chamber, gave intimation that something unusual was labouring in the King's mind.

Thus play was neglected—the music was silent, or played without being heard—gallants ceased to make compliments, and ladies to expect them; and a sort of apprehensive curiosity pervaded the circle. Each asked the others why they were grave; and no answer was returned, any more than could have been rendered by a herd of cattle instinctively disturbed by the approach of a thunder-storm.

To add to the general apprehension, it began to be whispered, that one or two of the guests, who were desirous of leaving the palace, had been informed no one could be permitted to retire until the general hour of dismissal. And these, gliding back into the hall, communicated in whispers that the sentinels at the gates were doubled, and that there was a troop of the Horse Guards drawn up in the court—circumstances so unusual, as to excite the most anxious curiosity.

Such was the state of the Court, when wheels were heard without, and the bustle which took place denoted the arrival of some person of consequence.

"Here comes Chiffinch," said the King, "with his prey in his clutch."

It was indeed the Duke of Buckingham; nor did he approach the royal presence without emotion. On entering the court, the flambeaux which were borne

around the carriage gleamed on the scarlet coats, laced hats, and drawn broadswords of the Horse Guards—a sight unusual, and calculated to strike terror into a conscience which was none of the clearest.

The Duke alighted from the carriage, and only said to the officer, whom he saw upon duty, "You are late under arms to-night, Captain Carleton."

"Such are our orders, sir," answered Carleton, with military brevity; and then commanded the four dismounted sentinels at the under gate to make way for the Duke of Buckingham. His Grace had no sooner entered, than he heard behind him the command, "Move close up, sentinels—closer yet to the gate." And he felt as if all chance of rescue were excluded by the sound.

As he advanced up the grand staircase, there were other symptoms of alarm and precaution. The Yeomen of the Guard were mustered in unusual numbers, and carried carabines instead of their halberds; and the Gentlemen Pensioners, with their partisans, appeared also in proportional force. In short, all that sort of defence which the royal household possesses within itself, seemed, for some hasty and urgent reason, to have been placed under arms and upon duty.

Buckingham ascended the royal staircase with an eye attentive to these preparations, and a step steady and slow, as if he counted each step on which he trode. "Who," he asked himself, "shall insure Christian's fidelity? Let him but stand fast, and we are secure. Otherwise——"

As he shaped the alternative, he entered the presence-chamber.

The King stood in the midst of the apartment, surrounded by the personages with whom he had been consulting. The rest of the brilliant assembly, scattered into groups, looked on at some distance. All were silent when Buckingham entered, in hopes of receiving some explanation of the mysteries of the evening. All bent forward, though etiquette forbade them to advance, to catch, if possible, something of what was about to pass betwixt the King and his intriguing statesman. At the same time, those counsellors who stood around Charles, drew back on either side, so as to permit the Duke to pay his respects to his Majesty in the usual form. He went through the ceremonial with his accustomed grace, but was received by Charles with much unwonted gravity.

"We have waited for you for some time, my Lord Duke. It is long since Chiffinch left us, to request your attendance here. I see you are elaborately dressed. Your toilette was needless on the present occasion."

"Needless to the splendour of your Majesty's Court," said the Duke, "but not needless on my part. This chanced to be Black Monday at York Place, and my club of *Pendables* were in full glee when your Majesty's summons arrived. I could not be in the company of Ogle, Maniduc, Dawson, and so forth, but what I must needs make some preparation, and some ablution, ere entering the circle here."

"I trust the purification will be complete," said the

King, without any tendency to the smile which always softened features, that, ungilded by its influence, were dark, harsh, and even severe. "We wished to ask your Grace concerning the import of a sort of musical mask which you designed us here, but which miscarried, as we are given to understand."

"It must have been a great miscarriage indeed," said the Duke, "since your Majesty looks so serious on it. I thought to have done your Majesty a pleasure (as I have seen you condescend to be pleased with such passages), by sending the contents of that bass-viol; but I fear the jest has been unacceptable—I fear the fire-works may have done mischief."

"Not the mischief they were designed for, perhaps," said the King, gravely; "you see, my lord, we are all alive, and unsinged."

"Long may your Majesty remain so," said the Duke; "yet I see that there is something misconstrued on my part—it must be a matter unpardonable, however little intended, since it hath displeased so indulgent a master."

"Too indulgent a master, indeed, Buckingham," replied the King; "and the fruit of my indulgence has been to change loyal men into traitors."

"May it please your Majesty, I cannot understand this," said the Duke.

"Follow us, my lord," answered Charles, "and we will endeavour to explain our meaning."

Attended by the same lords who stood around him, and followed by the Duke of Buckingham, on whom all

eyes were fixed, Charles retired into the same cabinet which had been the scene of repeated consultations in the course of the evening. There, leaning with his arms crossed on the back of an easy-chair, Charles proceeded to interrogate the suspected nobleman.

"Let us be plain with each other. Speak out, Buckingham. What, in one word, was to have been the regale intended for us this evening?"

"A petty-mask, my lord. I had destined a little dancing-girl to come out of that instrument, who, I thought, would have performed to your Majesty's liking —a few Chinese fireworks there were, which, thinking the entertainment was to have taken place in the marble hall, might, I hoped, have been discharged with good effect, and without the slightest alarm, at the first appearance of my little sorceress, and were designed to have masked, as it were, her entrance upon the stage. I hope there have been no perukes singed—no ladies frightened—no hopes of noble descent interrupted by my ill-fancied jest?"

"We have seen no such fireworks, my lord; and your female dancer, of whom we now hear for the first time, came forth in the form of our old acquaintance Geoffrey Hudson, whose dancing days are surely ended."

"Your Majesty surprises me! I beseech you let Christian be sent for—Edward Christian—he will be found lodging in a large old house near Sharper the cutler's in the Strand. As I live by bread, sire, I trusted him with the arrangement of this matter, as

indeed the dancing-girl was his property. If he has done aught to dishonour my concert, or disparage my character, he shall die under the baton."

"It is singular," said the King, "and I have often observed it, that this fellow Christian bears the blame of all men's enormities—he performs the part which, in a great family, is usually assigned to that mischief-doing personage, Nobody. When Chiffinch blunders, he always quotes Christian. When Sheffield writes a lampoon, I am sure to hear of Christian having corrected, or copied, or dispersed it—he is the *ame damnée* of every one about my Court—the scapegoat, who is to carry away all their iniquities; and he will have a cruel load to bear into the wilderness. But for Buckingham's sins, in particular, he is the regular and uniform sponsor; and I am convinced his Grace expects Christian should suffer every penalty he has incurred in this world or the next."

"Not so," with the deepest reverence replied the Duke. "I have no hope of being either hanged or damned by proxy; but it is clear some one hath tampered with and altered my device. If I am accused of aught, let me at least hear the charge and see my accuser."

"That is but fair," said the King. "Bring our little friend from behind the chimney-board. [Hudson being accordingly produced, he continued.] There stands the Duke of Buckingham. Repeat before him the tale you told us. Let him hear what were those contents of the bass-viol which were removed that you

might enter it. Be not afraid of any one, but speak the truth boldly."

"May it please your Majesty," said Hudson, "fear is a thing unknown to me."

"His body has no room to hold such a passion; or there is too little of it to be worth fearing for," said Buckingham.—"But let him speak."

Ere Hudson had completed his tale, Buckingham interrupted him by exclaiming, "Is it possible that I can be suspected by your Majesty on the word of this pitiful variety of the baboon tribe?"

"Villain-Lord, I appeal thee to the combat!" said the little man, highly offended at the appellation thus bestowed on him.

"La you there now!" said the Duke—"The little animal is quite crazed, and defies a man who need ask no other weapon than a corking-pin to run him through the lungs, and whose single kick could hoist him from Dover to Calais without yacht or wherry. And what can you expect from an idiot, who is *engoué* of a common rope-dancing-girl, that capered on a packthread at Ghent in Flanders, unless they were to club their talents to set up a booth at Bartholomew-Fair?—Is it not plain, that supposing the little animal is not malicious, as indeed his whole kind bear a general and most cankered malice against those who have the ordinary proportions of humanity—Grant, I say, that this were not a malicious falsehood of his, why, what does it amount to?—That he has mistaken squibs and Chinese crackers for arms! He says not he himself

touched or handled them; and judging by the sight alone, I question if the infirm old creature, when any whim or preconception hath possession of his noddle, can distinguish betwixt a blunderbuss and a black-pudding."

The horrible clamour which the dwarf made so soon as he heard this disparagement of his military skill—the haste with which he blundered out a detail of his warlike experiences—and the absurd grimaces which he made in order to enforce his story, provoked not only the risibility of Charles, but even of the statesmen around him, and added absurdity to the motley complexion of the scene. The King terminated this dispute, by commanding the dwarf to withdraw.

A more regular discussion of his evidence was then resumed, and Ormond was the first who pointed out, that it went farther than had been noticed, since the little man had mentioned a certain extraordinary and treasonable conversation held by the Duke's dependents, by whom he had been conveyed to the palace.

"I am sure not to lack my lord of Ormond's good word," said the Duke, scornfully; "but I defy him alike, and all my other enemies, and shall find it easy to shew that this alleged conspiracy, if any grounds for it at all exist, is a mere sham-plot, got up to turn the odium justly attached to the Papists upon the Protestants. Here is a half-hanged creature, who, on the very day he escapes from the gallows, which many believe was his most deserved destiny, comes to take away the reputation of a Protestant Peer—and, on

what?—on the treasonable conversation of three or four German fiddlers, heard through the sound-holes of a violoncello, and that, too, when the creature was incased in it, and mounted on a man's shoulders! The urchin, too, in repeating their language, shews he understands German as little as my horse does; and if he did rightly hear, truly comprehend, and accurately report what they said, still, is my honour to be touched by the language held by such persons as these are, with whom I have never communicated, otherwise than men of my rank do with those of their calling and capacity? —Pardon me, sire, if I presume to say, that the profound statesmen who endeavoured to stifle the Popish conspiracy by the pretended Meal-tub Plot, will take little more credit by their figments about fiddles and concertos."

The assistant counsellors looked at each other; and Charles turned on his heel, and walked through the room with long steps.

At this period the Peverils, father and son, were announced to have reached the palace, and were ordered into the royal presence.

These gentlemen had received the royal mandate at a moment of great interest. After being dismissed from their confinement by the elder Bridgenorth, in the manner and upon the terms which the reader must have gathered from the conversation of the latter with Christian, they reached the lodgings of Lady Peveril, who awaited them with joy, mingled with terror and uncertainty. The news of the acquittal had reached

her by the exertions of the faithful Lance Outram, but her mind had been since harassed by the long delay of their appearance, and rumours of disturbances which had taken place in Fleet-Street and in the Strand.

When the first rapturous meeting was over, Lady Peveril, with an anxious look towards her son, as if recommending caution, said she was now about to present to him the daughter of an old friend, whom he had *never* (there was an emphasis on the word) seen before. "This young lady," she continued, "was the only child of Colonel Mitford, in North Wales, who had sent her to remain under her guardianship for an interval, finding himself unequal to attempt the task of her education."

"Ay, ay," said Sir Geoffrey, "Dick Mitford must be old now—beyond the threescore and ten, I think. He was no chicken, though a cock of the game, when he joined the Marquis of Hertford at Namptwich with two hundred wild Welshmen.—Before George, Julian, I love that girl as if she was my own flesh and blood! Lady Peveril would never have got through this work without her; and Dick Mitford sent me a thousand pieces, too, in excellent time, when there was scarce a cross to keep the devil from dancing in our pockets, much more for these law-doings. I used it without scruple, for there is wood ready to be cut at Martindale when we get down there, and Dick Mitford knows I would have done the like for him. Strange that he should have been the only one of my friends to reflect I might want a few pieces."

Whilst Sir Geoffrey thus run on, the meeting betwixt Alice and Julian Peveril was accomplished, without any particular notice on his side, except to say, "Kiss her, Julian—kiss her. What the devil! is that the way you learned to accost a lady at the Isle of Man, as if her lips were a red-hot horse-shoe?—And do not you be offended, my pretty one; Julian is naturally bashful, and has been bred by an old lady, but you will find him, by and by, as gallant as thou has found me, my princess.—And now, Dame Peveril, to dinner, to dinner! the old fox must have his belly-timber, though the hounds have been after him the whole day."

Lance, whose joyous congratulations were next to be undergone, had the consideration to cut them short, in order to provide a plain but hearty meal from the next cook's-shop, at which Julian sat like one enchanted, betwixt his mistress and his mother. He easily conceived that the last was the confidential friend to whom Bridgenorth had finally committed the charge of his daughter, and his only anxiety now was, to anticipate the confusion that was likely to arise when her real parentage was made known to his father. Wisely, however, he suffered not these anticipations to interfere with the delight of his present situation, in the course of which, many slight but delightful tokens of recognition were exchanged, without censure, under the eye of Lady Peveril, under cover of the boisterous mirth of the old Baronet, who spoke for two, ate for four, and drank wine for half-a-dozen. His progress in

the latter exercise might have proceeded rather too far, had he not been interrupted by a gentleman bearing the King's orders, that he should instantly attend upon the presence at Whitehall, and bring his son along with him.

Lady Peveril was alarmed, and Alice grew pale with sympathetic anxiety; but the old Knight, who never saw more than what lay straight before him, set it down to the King's hasty anxiety to congratulate him on his escape; an interest on his Majesty's part which he considered by no means extravagant, conscious that it was reciprocal on his own side. It came upon him, indeed, with the more joyful surprise, that he had received a previous hint, ere he left the court of justice, that it would be prudent in him to go down to Martindale before presenting himself at Court,—a restriction which he supposed as repugnant to his Majesty's feelings as it was to his own.

While he consulted with Lance Outram about cleaning his buff-belt and sword-hilt, as well as time admitted, Lady Peveril had the means to give Julian more distinct information, that Alice was under her protection by her father's authority, and with his consent to their union, if it could be accomplished. She added, that it was her determination to employ the mediation of the Countess of Derby, to overcome the obstacles which might be foreseen on the part of Sir Geoffrey.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-NINTH.

> In the King's name,
> Let fall your swords and daggers! CRITIC.

WHEN the father and son entered the cabinet of audience, it was easily visible that Sir Geoffrey had obeyed

the summons as he would have done the trumpet's call to horse; and his dishevelled gray locks and half-arranged dress, though they shewed zeal and haste, such as he would have used when Charles I. called him to attend a council of war, seemed rather indecorous in a pacific drawing-room. He paused at the door of the cabinet, but when the King called on him to advance, came hastily forward, with every feeling of his earlier and later life afloat and contending in his memory, threw himself on his knees before the King, seized his hand, and, without even an effort to speak, wept aloud. Charles, who generally felt deeply so long as an impressive object was before his eyes, indulged for a moment the old man's rapture.—"My good Sir Geoffrey," he said, "you have had some hard measure; we owe you amends, and will find time to pay our debt."

"No suffering—no debt," said the old man; "I cared not what the rogues said of me—I knew they could never get twelve honest fellows to believe a word of their most damnable lies. I did long to beat them when they called me traitor to your Majesty—that I confess—But to have such an early opportunity of paying my duty to your Majesty, overpays it all. The villains would have persuaded me I ought not to come to Court—aha!"

The Duke of Ormond perceived that the King coloured much; for in truth it was from the Court that the private intimation had been given to Sir Geoffrey, to go down to the country, without appearing at Whitehall; and he, moreover, suspected that the jolly old

Knight had not risen from his dinner altogether dry-lipped, after the fatigues of a day so agitating.—"My old friend," he whispered, "you forget that your son is to be presented—permit me to have that honour."

"I crave your Grace's pardon humbly," said Sir Geoffrey, "but it is an honour I design for myself, as I apprehend no one can so utterly surrender and deliver him up to his Majesty's service as the father that begot him is entitled to do.—Julian, come forward, and kneel.—Here he is, please your Majesty—Julian Peveril—a chip of the old block—as stout, though scarce so tall a tree, as the old trunk when at the freshest. Take him to you, sir, for a faithful servant, *à vendre et à pendre*, as the French say; if he fears fire or steal, axe or gallows, in your Majesty's service, I renounce him—he is no son of mine—I disown him, and he may go to the Isle of Man, the Isle of Dogs, or the Isle of Devils, for what I care."

Charles winked to Ormond, and having, with his wonted courtesy, expressed, his thorough conviction that Julian would imitate the loyalty of his ancestors, and especially of his father, added, that he believed his Grace of Ormond had something to communicate which was of consequence to his service. Sir Geoffrey made his military reverence at this hint, and marched off in the rear of the Duke, who proceeded to inquire of him concerning the events of the day. Charles, in the meanwhile, having, in the first place, ascertained that the son was not in the same genial condition with the father, demanded and received from him a precise

account of all the proceedings subsequent to the trial.

Julian, with the plainness and precision which such a subject demanded, when treated in such a presence, narrated all that had happened, down to the entrance of Bridgenorth; and his Majesty was so much pleased with his manner, that he congratulated Arlington on their having gained the evidence of at least one man of sense to these dark and mysterious events. But when Bridgenorth was brought upon the scene, Julian hesitated to bestow a name upon him; and although he mentioned the chapel which he had seen filled with men in arms, and the violent language of the preacher, he added, with earnestness, that notwithstanding all this, the men departed without coming to any extremity, and had all left the place before his father and he were set at liberty.

"And you retired quietly to your dinner in Fleet-street, young man," said the King, severely, "without giving a magistrate notice of the dangerous meeting which was held in the vicinity of our palace, and who did not conceal their intention of proceeding to extremities?"

Peveril blushed, and was silent. The King frowned, and stepped aside to communicate with Ormond, who reported that the father seemed to have known nothing of the matter.

"And the son, I am sorry to say," said the King, "seems more unwilling to speak the truth than I should have expected. We have all variety of evi-

dence in this singular investigation—a mad witness like the dwarf, a drunken witness like the father, and now a dumb witness.—Young man," he continued, addressing Julian, "your behaviour is less frank than I expected from your father's son. I must know who this person is with whom you held such familiar intercourse—you know him, I presume?"

Julian acknowledged that he did, but, kneeling on one knee, entreated his Majesty's forgiveness for concealing his name; "he had been freed," he said, "from his confinement, on promising to that effect."

"That was a promise made, by your own account, under compulsion," answered the King, "and I cannot authorize your keeping it; it is your duty to speak the truth—if you are afraid of Buckingham, the Duke shall withdraw."

"I have no reason to fear the Duke of Buckingham," said Peveril; "that I had an affair with one of his household, was the man's own fault, and not mine."

"Oddsfish!" said the King, "the light begins to break in on me—I thought I remembered thy physiognomy. Wert thou not the very fellow whom I met at Chiffinch's yonder morning?—The matter escaped me since; but now I recollect thou saidst then, that thou wert the son of that jolly old three-bottle Baronet yonder."

"It is true," said Julian, "that I met your Majesty at Master Chiffinch's, and I am afraid had the misfortune to displease you; but——"

"No more of that, young man—no more of that—But I recollect you had with you that beautiful dancing siren.—Buckingham, I will hold you gold to silver that she was the intended tenant of that bass-fiddle?"

"Your Majesty has rightly guessed it," said the Duke; "and I suspect she has put a trick upon me, by substituting the dwarf in her place; for Christian thinks——"

"Damn Christian!" said the King, hastily—"I wish they would bring him hither, that universal referee."—And as the wish was uttered, Christian's arrival was announced. "Let him attend," said the King: "But hark—a thought strikes me.—Here, Master Peveril—yonder dancing maiden, that introduced you to us by the singular agility of her performance, is she not, by your account, a dependent on the Countess of Derby?"

"I have known her such for years," answered Julian.

"Then will we call the Countess hither," said the King: "It is fit we should learn who this little fairy really is; and if she be now so absolutely at the beck of Buckingham, and this Master Christian of his—why I think it would be but charity to let her ladyship know so much, since I question if she will wish, in that case, to retain her in her service. Besides," he continued, speaking apart, "this Julian, to whom suspicion attaches in these matters from his obstinate silence, is also of the Countess's household. We will sift this matter to the bottom, and do justice to all."

The Countess of Derby, hastily summoned, entered the royal closet at one door, just as Christian and Zarah,

or Fenella, were ushered in by the other. The old Knight of Martindale, who had ere this returned to the presence, was scarce controlled, even by the signs which she made, so much was he desirous of greeting his old friend; but as Ormond laid a kind restraining hand upon his arm, he was prevailed on to sit still.

The Countess, after a deep reverence to the King, acknowledged the rest of the nobility present by a slighter reverence, smiled to Julian Peveril, and looked with surprise at the unexpected apparition of Fenella. Buckingham bit his lip, for he saw the introduction of Lady Derby was likely to confuse and embroil every preparation which he had arranged for his defence; and he stole a glance at Christian, whose eye, when fixed on the Countess, assumed the deadly sharpness which sparkles in the adder's, while his cheek grew almost black under the influence of strong emotion.

"Is there any one in this presence whom your ladyship recognises," said the King, graciously, "besides your old friends of Ormond and Arlington?"

"I see, my liege, two worthy friends of my husband's house," replied the Countess; "Sir Geoffrey Peveril and his son—the latter a distinguished member of my son's household."

"Any on else?" continued the King.

"An unfortunate female of my family, who disappeared from the Island of Man at the same time when Julian Peveril left it upon business of importance. She was thought to have fallen from the cliff into the sea."

"Had your ladyship any reason to suspect—pardon me," said the King, "for putting such a question—any improper intimacy between Master Peveril and this same female attendant?"

"My liege," said the Countess, colouring indignantly, "my household is of reputation."

"Nay, my lady, be not angry," said the King; "I did but ask—such things will befall in the best-regulated families."

"Not in mine, sire," said the Countess. "Besides that, in common pride and in common honesty, Julian Peveril is incapable of intriguing with an unhappy creature, removed by her misfortune almost beyond the limits of humanity."

Zarah looked at her, and compressed her lips, as if to keep in the words that would fain break from them.

"I know not how it is," said the King—"What your ladyship says may be true in the main, yet men's tastes have strange vagaries. This girl is lost in Man as soon as the youth leaves it, and is found in Saint James's Park, bouncing and dancing like a fairy, so soon as he appears in London."

"Impossible!" said the Countess; "she cannot dance."

"I believe," said the King, "she can do more feats than your ladyship either suspects or would approve of."

The Countess drew up, and was indignantly silent.

The King proceeded—"No sooner is Peveril in Newgate, than, by the account of the venerable little

gentleman, this merry maiden is even there also for company. Now, without inquiring how she got in, I think charitably, that she had better taste than to come there on the dwarf's account.—Ah ha! I think Master Julian is touched in conscience!"

Julian did indeed start as the King spoke, for it reminded him of the midnight visit in his cell.

The King looked fixedly at him, and then proceeded —"Well gentlemen, Peveril is carried to his trial, and is no sooner at liberty, than we find him in the house where the Duke of Buckingham was arranging what he calls a musical mask.—Egad, I hold it next to certain, that this wench put the change on his Grace, and popt the poor dwarf into the bass-viol, reserving her own more precious hours to be spent with Master Julian Peveril.—Think you not so, Sir Christian, you, the universal referee? Is there any truth in this conjecture?"

Christian stole a glance on Zarah, and read that in her eye which embarrassed him. "He did not know," he said; "he had indeed engaged this unrivalled performer to take the proposed part in the mask; and she was to have come forth in the midst of a shower of lambent fire, very artificially prepared with perfumes, to overcome the smell of the powder; but he knew not why—excepting that she was wilful and capricious, like all great geniuses,—she had certainly spoiled the concert by cramming in that more bulky dwarf."

"I should like," said the King, "to see this little maiden stand forth, and bear witness, in such manner

as she can express herself, on this mysterious matter. Can any one here understand her mode of communication?"

Christian said, he knew something of it since he had become acquainted with her in London. The Countess spoke not till the King asked her, and then owned dryly, that she had necessarily some habitual means of intercourse with one who had been immediately about her person for so many years.

"I should think," said Charles, "that this same Master Peveril has the more direct key to her language, after all we have heard."

The King looked first at Peveril, who blushed like a maiden at the inference which the King's remark implied, and then suddenly turned his eyes on the supposed mute, on whose cheek a faint colour was dying away. A moment afterwards, at a signal from the Countess, Fenella, or Zarah, stepped forward, and having kissed her lady's hand, stood with her arms folded on her breast, with an humble air, as different from that which she wore in the harem of the Duke of Buckingham, as that of a Magdalen from a Judith. Yet this was the least show of her talent of versatility, for so well did she play the part of the dumb girl, that Buckingham, sharp as his discernment was, remained undecided whether the creature which stood before him could possibly be the same with her, who had, in a different dress, made such an impression on his imagination, or indeed was the imperfect creature she now represented. She had at once all that

could mark the imperfection of hearing, and all that could shew the wonderful address by which nature so often makes up for the deficiency. There was the lip that trembled not at any sound—the seeming insensibility to the conversation which passed around; while, on the other hand, was the quick and vivid glance, that seemed anxious to devour the meaning of those sounds, which she could gather no otherwise than by the motion of the lips.

Examined after her own fashion, Zarah confirmed the tale of Christian in all its points, and admitted that she had deranged the project laid for a mask, by placing the dwarf in her own stead; the cause of her doing so she declined to assign, and the Countess pressed her no farther.

"Every thing tells to exculpate my Lord of Buckingham," said Charles from so absurd an accusation: the dwarf's testimony is too fantastic, that of the two Peverils does not in the least affect the Duke; that of the dumb damsel completely contradicts the possibility of his guilt. Methinks, my lords, we should acquaint him that he stands acquitted of a complaint, too ridiculous to have been subjected to a more serious scrutiny than we have hastily made upon this occasion."

Arlington bowed in acquiescence, but Ormond spoke plainly.—"I should suffer, sire, in the opinion of the Duke of Buckingham, brilliant as his talents are known to be, should I say that I am satisfied in my own mind on this occasion. But I subscribe to the spirit of the times; and I agree it would be highly

dangerous, on such accusations as we have been able to collect, to impeach the character of a zealous Protestant like his Grace—Had he been a Catholic, under such circumstances of suspicion, the Tower had been too good a prison for him."

Buckingham bowed to the Duke of Ormond, with a meaning which even his triumph could not disguise. —"*Tu me la pagherai!*" he muttered, in a tone of deep and abiding resentment; but the stout old Irishman, who had long since braved his utmost wrath, cared little for this expression of his displeasure.

The King then, signing to the other nobles to pass into the public apartments, stopped Buckingham as he was about to follow them; and, when they were alone, asked with a significant tone, which brought all the blood in the Duke's veins into his countenance, "When was it, George, that your useful friend Colonel Blood* became a musician?—You are silent," he said; "do not deny the charge, for yonder villain, once seen, is remembered for ever. Down, down on your knees, George, and acknowledge that you have abused my easy temper. —Seek for no apology—none will serve your turn. I saw the man myself, among your Germans as you call them; and you know what I must needs believe from such a circumstance."

"Believe that I have been guilty—most guilty, my liege and King," said the Duke, conscience-stricken, and kneeling down;—"believe that I was misguided—that I was mad—Believe anything but that I was capable

* Note F. History of Colonel Thomas Blood.

of harming, or being accessory to harm your person."

"I do not believe it," said the King; "I think of you, Villiers, as the companion of my dangers and my exile, and am so far from supposing you mean worse than you say, that I am convinced you acknowledge more than ever you meant to attempt."

"By all that is sacred," said the Duke, still kneeling, "had I not been involved to the extent of life and fortune with the villain Christian——"

"Nay, if you bring Christian on the stage again," said the King, smiling, "it is time for me to withdraw. Come Villiers, rise—I forgive thee, and only recommend one act of penance—the curse you yourself bestowed on the dog who bit you—marriage and retirement to your country-seat."

The Duke rose abashed, and followed the King into the circle, which Charles entered, leaning on the shoulder of his repentant peer; to whom he shewed so much countenance, as led the most acute observers present, to doubt the possibility of there existing any real cause for the surmises to the Duke's prejudice.

The Countess of Derby had in the meanwhile consulted with the Duke of Ormond, with the Peverils, and with her other friends; and, by their unanimous advice, though with considerable difficulty, became satisfied, that to have thus shewn herself at Court, was sufficient to vindicate the honour of her house; and that it was her wisest course, after having done so, to retire to her insular dominions, without farther provok-

ing the resentment of a powerful faction. She took farewell of the King in form, and demanded his permission to carry back with her the helpless creature who had so strangely escaped from her protection, into a world where her condition rendered her so subject to every species of misfortune.

"Will your ladyship forgive me?" said Charles, "I have studied your sex long—I am mistaken if your little maiden is not as capable of caring for herself as any of us."

"Impossible!" said the Countess.

"Possible, and most true," whispered the King. "I will instantly convince you of the fact, though the experiment is too delicate to be made by any but your ladyship. Yonder she stands, looking as if she heard no more than the marble pillar against which she leans. Now, if Lady Derby will contrive either to place her hand near the region of the damsel's heart, or at least on her arm, so that she can feel the sensation of the blood when the pulse increases, then do you, my Lord of Ormond, beckon Julian Peveril out of sight—I will shew you in a moment that it can stir at sounds spoken."

The Countess, much surprised, afraid of some embarrassing pleasantry on the part of Charles, yet unable to repress her curiosity, placed herself near Fenella, as she called her little mute; and, while making signs to her, contrived to place her hand on her wrist.

At this moment the King, passing near them, said, "This is a horrid deed—the villain Christian has stabbed young Peveril!"

The mute evidence of the pulse, which bounded as if a cannon had been discharged close by the poor girl's ear, was accompanied by such a loud scream of agony, as distressed, while it startled, the good-natured monarch himself. "I did but jest," he said; "Julian is well, my pretty maiden. I only used the wand of a certain blind deity, called Cupid, to bring a deaf and dumb vassal of his to the exercise of her faculties."*

"I am betrayed!" she said, with her eyes fixed on the ground—"I am betrayed!—and it is fit that she, whose life has been spent in practising treason on others, should be caught in her own snare.—But where is my tutor in iniquity?—Where is Christian, who taught me to play the part of spy on this unsuspicious lady, until I had well-nigh delivered her into his bloody hands?"

"This," said the King, "craves more secret examination. Let all leave the apartment who are not immediately connected with these proceedings, and let this Christian be again brought before us.—Wretched man," he continued, addressing Christian, "what wiles are these you have practised, and by what extraordinary means?"

"She has betrayed me then!" said Christian—"Betrayed me to bonds and death, merely for an idle passion, which can never be successful!—But know, Zara," he added, addressing her sternly, "when my life is forfeited through thy evidence, the daughter has murdered the father!"

* Note G.

The unfortunate girl stared on him in astonishment. "You said," at length she stammered forth, "that I was the daughter of your slaughtered brother?"

"That was partly to reconcile thee to the part thou wert to play in my destined drama of vengeance—partly to hide what men call the infamy of thy birth. But *my* daughter thou art! and from the Eastern clime, in which thy mother was born, you derive that fierce torrent of passion which I laboured to train to my purposes, but which, turned into another channel, has become the cause of your father's destruction.—My destiny is the Tower, I suppose?"

He spoke these words with great composure, and scarce seemed to regard the agonies of his daughter, who, throwing herself at his feet, sobbed and wept most bitterly.

"This must not be," said the King, moved with compassion at this scene of misery. "If you consent, Christian, to leave this country, there is a vessel in the river bound for New England—Go, carry your dark intrigues to other lands."

"I might dispute the sentence," said Christian, boldly; "and if I submit to it, it is a matter of my own choice.—One half hour had made me even with that proud woman, but fortune hath cast the balance against me.—Rise, Zarah, Fenella no more! Tell the lady of Derby, that, if the daughter of Edward Christian, the niece of her murdered victim, served her as a menial, it was but for the purpose of vengeance—miserably, miserably frustrated!—Thou seest thy folly now—thou

wouldst follow yonder ungrateful stripling — thou wouldst forsake all other thoughts to gain his slightest notice; and now thou art a forlorn outcast, ridiculed and insulted by those on whose necks you might have trod, had you governed yourself with more wisdom!— But come, thou art still my daughter—there are other skies than that which canopies Britain."

"Stop him," said the King; "we must know by what means this maiden found access to those confined in our prisons."

"I refer your Majesty to your most Protestant jailor, and to the most Protestant Peers, who, in order to obtain perfect knowledge of the depth of the Popish Plot, have contrived these ingenious apertures for visiting them in their cells by night or day. His Grace of Buckingham can assist your Majesty, if you are inclined to make the inquiry."*

"Christian," said the Duke, "thou art the most barefaced villain who ever breathed."

"Of a commoner, I may," answered Christian, and led his daughter out of the presence.

"See after him, Selby," said the King; "lose not sight of him till the ship sail; if he dare return to Britain, it shall be at his peril. Would to God we had as good riddance of others as dangerous! And I would also," he added, after a moment's pause, "that all our political intrigues and feverish alarms could

* It was said that very unfair means were used to compel the prisoners, committed on account of the Popish Plot, to make disclosures, and that several of them were privately put to the torture.

terminate as harmlessly as now. Here is a plot without a drop of blood; and all the elements of a romance, without its conclusion. Here we have a wandering island princess (I pray my Lady of Derby's pardon), a dwarf, a Moorish sorceress, an impenitent rogue, and a repentant man of rank, and yet all ends without either hanging or marriage."

"Not altogether without the latter," said the Countess, who had an opportunity, during the evening, of much private conversation with Julian Peveril. "There is a certain Major Bridgenorth, who, since your Majesty relinquishes farther inquiry into these proceedings, which he had otherwise intended to abide, designs, as we are informed, to leave England for ever. Now, this Bridgenorth, by dint of the law, hath acquired strong possession over the domains of Peveril, which he is desirous to restore to the ancient owners, with much fair lands besides, conditionally, that our young Julian will receive them as the dowry of his only child and heir."

"By my faith," said the King, "she must be a foul-favoured wench, indeed, if Julian requires to be pressed to accept her on such fair conditions."

"They love each other like lovers of the last age," said the Countess; "but the stout old knight likes not the roundheaded alliance."

"Our royal recommendation shall put that to rights," said the King; "Sir Geoffrey Peveril has not suffered hardship so often at our command, that he will refuse our recommendation when it comes to make him amends for all his losses."

It may be supposed the King did not speak without being fully aware of the unlimited ascendency which he possessed over the spirit of the old Tory; for, within four weeks afterwards, the bells of Martindale-Moultrassie were ringing for the union of the families, from whose estates it takes its compound name, and the beacon-light of the Castle blazed high over hill and dale, and summoned all to rejoice who were within twenty miles of its gleam.

NOTES TO VOLUME XXX.

NOTE A, p. 41. SILK ARMOUR.

Roger North gives us a ridiculous description of these warlike habiliments, when talking of the Whig Club in Fuller's Rents: "The conversation and ordinary discourse of the Club was chiefly on the subject of bravery in defending the cause of liberty and property, and what every Protestant Englishman ought to venture and do, rather than be overrun with Popery and slavery. There was much recommendation of silk armour, and the prudence of being provided with it, against the time that Protestants were to be massacred; and accordingly there were abundance of these silken backs, breasts, and pots [*i.e.*, head-pieces], made and sold, which were pretended to be pistol proof, in which any man dressed up was as safe as in a house; for it was impossible any one could go to strike him for laughing, so ridiculous was the figure, as they say, of hogs in armour—an image of derision insensible but to the view, as I have had it [viz., that none can imagine without seeing it, as I have]. This was armour of defence, but our sparks were not altogether so tame as to carry their provisions no farther; for truly they intended to be assailants upon fair occasion, and had for that end recommended to them a certain pocket weapon, which, for its design and efficacy, had the honour to be called a Protestant flail. It was for street and crowd work, and the instrument, lurking *perdue* in a coat-pocket, might readily sally out to execution, and by clearing a great hall, piazza, or so, carry an election, by a choice way of polling called 'knocking down.' The handle resembled a farrier's blood-stick, and the fall

was joined to the end by a strong nervous ligature, that in its swing fell short of the hand, and was made of *lignum-vitæ*, or rather, as the poet termed it, *mortis*."—*Examen*, p. 173.

This last weapon will remind the reader of the blood-stick so cruelly used, as was alleged, in a murder committed in England some years ago, and for a participation in which two persons were tried and acquitted at the assizes of autumn 1830.

Note B, p. 68. Geoffrey Hudson.

Geoffrey or Jeffrey Hudson is often mentioned in anecdotes of Charles I.'s time. His first appearance at court was his being presented, as mentioned in the text, in a pie at an entertainment given by the Duke of Buckingham to Charles I. and Henrietta Maria. Upon the same occasion, the Duke presented the tenant of the pasty to the Queen, who retained him as her page. When about eight years of age, he was but eighteen or twenty inches high; and remained stationary at that stature till he was thirty years old, when he grew to the height of three feet nine inches, and there stopped.

This singular *lusus naturæ* was trusted in some negotiations of consequence. He went to France to fetch over a midwife to his mistress, Henrietta Maria. On his return, he was taken by Dunkirk privateers, when he lost many valuable presents sent to the Queen from France, and about £2500 of his own. Sir William Davenant makes a real or supposed combat between the dwarf and a turkey-cock, the subject of a poem called Jeffreidos. The scene is laid at Dunkirk, where, as the satire concludes—

> Jeffrey strait was thrown, when, faint and weak,
> The cruel fowl assaults him with his beak.
> A lady midwife now he there by chance
> Espied, that came along with him from France.
> 'A heart brought up in war, that ne'er before
> This time could bow,' he said, 'doth now implore
> Thou, that *delivered* hast so many, be
> So kind of nature as deliver me.'

We are not acquainted how far Jeffrey resented this lampoon. But we are assured he was a consequential personage, and endured

with little temper the teazing of the domestics and courtiers, and had many squabbles with the King's gigantic porter.

The fatal duel with Mr. Crofts actually took place as mentioned in the text. It happened in France. The poor dwarf had also the misfortune to be taken prisoner by a Turkish pirate. He was, however, probably soon set at liberty, for Hudson was a captain for the King during the civil war. In 1644, the dwarf attended his royal mistress to France. The restoration recalled him, with other royalists, to England. But this poor being, who received, it would seem, hard measure both from nature and fortune, was not doomed to close his days in peace. Poor Jeffrey, upon some suspicion respecting the Popish Plot, was taken up in 1682, and confined in the Gatehouse prison, Westminster, where he ended his life in the sixty-third year of his age.

Jeffrey Hudson has been immortalized by the brush of Vandyke, and his clothes are said to be preserved as articles of curiosity in Sir Hans Sloan's Museum.

Note C, p. 137. Colonel Blood's Narrative.

Of Blood's Narrative, Roger North takes the following notice: —"There was another sham plot of one Netterville . . . . . And here the good Colonel Blood, that stole the Duke of Ormond, and, if a timely rescue had not come in, had hanged him at Tyburn, and afterwards stole the crown, though he was not so happy as to carry it off; no player at small games, he, even he, the virtuous Colonel, as this sham plot says, was to have been destroyed by the Papists. It seems these Papists would let no eminent Protestant be safe. But some amends were made to the Colonel by sale of the narrative licensed Thomas Blood. It would have been strange if so much mischief were stirring, and he had not come in for a snack."—*Examen*, edit. 1711, p. 311.

Note D, p. 179. Colonel Blood.

The conspirator Blood even fought or made his way into good society, and sat at good men's feasts. Evelyn's diary bears, 10th

May, 1671,—"Dined at Mr. Treasurer's, where dined Monsieur de Grammont and several French noblemen, and one Blood, that impudent, bold fellow, that had not long ago attempted to steal the Imperial crown itself out of the Tower, pretending curiosity of seeing the Regalia, when, stabbing the keeper, though not mortally, he boldly went away with it through all the guards, taken only by the accident of his horse falling down. How he came to be pardoned, and even received into favour, not only after this, but several other exploits almost as daring, both in Ireland and here, I could never come to understand. Some believed he became a spy of several parties, being well with the sectaries and enthusiasts, and did his Majesty service that way, which none alive could do so well as he. But it was certainly, as the boldest attempt, so the only treason of the sort that was ever pardoned. The man had not only a daring, but a villanous unmerciful look, a false countenance, but very well spoken and dangerously insinuating."—EVELYN'S *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 413.

This is one of the many occasions on which we might make curious remarks on the disregard of our forefathers for appearances, even in the regulation of society. What should we think of a Lord of the Treasury, who, to make up a party of French nobles and English gentlemen of condition, should invite as a guest Barrington or Major Semple, or any well-known *chevalier d'industrie*? Yet Evelyn does not seem to have been shocked at the man being brought into society, but only at his remaining unhanged.

NOTE E, p. 277. THE SHERIFF OF LONDON.

It can hardly be forgotten that one of the great difficulties of Charles II.'s reign was to obtain for the crown the power of choosing the sheriffs of London. Roger North gives a lively account of his brother, Sir Dudley North, who agreed to serve for the court. "I omit the share he had in composing the tumults about burning the Pope, because that is accounted for in the Examen, and the Life of the Lord Keeper North. Neither is there occasion to say any thing of the rise and discovery of the Rye Plot, for the same reason. Nor is my subject much con-

cerned with this latter, farther than that the conspirators had taken especial care of Sir Dudley North. For he was one of those who, if they had succeeded, was to have been knocked on the head, and his skin to be stuffed, and hung up in Guildhall. But, all that apart, he reckoned it a great unhappiness, that so many trials for high treason, and executions, should happen in his year. However, in these affairs, the sheriffs were passive; for all returns of panels, and other despatches of the law, were issued and done by under-officers; which was a fair screen for them. They attended at the trials and executions, to coerce the crowds, and keep order, which was enough for them to do. I have heard Sir Dudley North say, that, striking with his cane, he wondered to see what blows his countrymen would take upon their bare heads, and never look up at it. And indeed, nothing can match the zeal of the common people to see executions. The worst grievance was the executioner coming to him for orders, touching the abscinded members, and to know where to dispose of them. Once, while he was abroad, a cart, with some of them, came into the court-yard of his house, and frighted his lady almost out of her wits; and she could never be reconciled to the dog hangman's saying he came to speak with his master. These are inconveniences that attend the stations of public magistracy, and are necessary to be borne with, as magistracy itself is necessary. I have now no more to say of any incidents during the shrievalty; but that, at the year's end, he delivered up his charges to his successors in like manner as he had received them from his predecessor; and, having reinstated his family, he lived well and easy at his own house, as he did before these disturbances put him out of order."

NOTE F, p. 332. HISTORY OF COLONEL THOMAS BLOOD.

This person, who was capable of framing and carrying into execution the most desperate enterprises, was one of those extraordinary characters, who can only arise amid the bloodshed, confusion, destruction of morality, and wide-spreading violence, which take place during civil war. The arrangement of the present volume admitting of a lengthened digression, we cannot,

perhaps, enter upon a subject more extraordinary or entertaining, than the history of this notorious desperado, who exhibited all the elements of a most accomplished ruffian. As the account of these adventures is scattered in various and scarce publications, it will probably be a service to the reader to bring the most remarkable of them under his eye, in a simultaneous point of view.

Blood's father is reported to have been a blacksmith; but this was only a disparaging mode of describing a person who had a concern in iron-works, and had thus acquired independence. He entered early in life into the Civil War, served as a lieutenant in the Parliament forces, and was put by Henry Cromwell, Lord Deputy of Ireland, into the commission of the peace, when he was scarcely two-and-twenty. This outset in life decided his political party for ever; and however unfit the principles of such a man rendered him for the society of those who professed a rigidity of religion and morals, so useful was Blood's rapidity of invention, and so well was he known, that he was held capable of framing with sagacity, and conducting with skill, the most desperate undertakings, and in a turbulent time, was allowed to associate with the non-jurors, who affected a peculiar austerity of conduct and sentiments. In 1663, the Act of Settlement in Ireland, and the proceedings thereupon, affected Blood deeply in his fortune, and from that moment he appears to have nourished the most inveterate hatred to the Duke of Ormond, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whom he considered as the author of the measures under which he suffered. There were at this time many malcontents of the same party with himself, so that Lieutenant Blood, as the most daring among them, was able to put himself at the head of a conspiracy which had for its purpose the exciting a general insurrection, and, as a preliminary step, the surprising of the castle of Dublin. The means proposed for the last purpose, which was to be the prelude to the rising, augured the desperation of the person by whom it was contrived, and yet might probably have succeeded, from its very boldness. A declaration was drawn up by the hand of Blood himself, calling upon all persons to take arms for the liberty of the subject, and the restoration of the Solemn League and Covenant. For the surprise of the castle, it was provided, that several persons with petitions in their hands, were to wait within the walls, as if they staid to

present them to the Lord Lieutenant, while about fourscore of the old daring disbanded soldiers were to remain on the outside, dressed like carpenters, smiths, shoemakers, and other ordinary mechanics. As soon as the Lord Lieutenant went in, a baker was to pass by the main guard with a large basket of white bread on his back. By making a false step, he was to throw down his burden, which might create a scramble among the soldiers, and offer the fourscore men before mentioned an opportunity of disarming them, while the others with petitions in their hands secured all within; and being once master of the castle and the Duke of Ormond's person, they were to publish their declaration. But some of the principal conspirators were apprehended about twelve hours before the time appointed for the execution of the design, in which no less than seven members of the House of Commons (for the Parliament of Ireland was then sitting) were concerned. Leckie, a minister, the brother-in-law of Blood, was with several others tried, condemned, and executed. Blood effected his escape, but was still so much the object of public apprehension, that a rumour having arisen during Leckie's execution, that Major Blood was at hand with a party to rescue the prisoner, every one of the guards, and the executioner himself, shifted for themselves, leaving Leckie, with the halter about his neck, standing alone under the gallows; but as no rescue appeared, the sheriff-officers returned to their duty, and the criminal was executed. Meantime Blood retired among the mountains of Ireland, where he herded alternately with fanatics and Papists, provided only they were discontented with the government. There were few persons better acquainted with the intrigues of the time than this active partisan, who was alternately Quaker, Anabaptist, or Catholic, but always a rebel, and revolutionist; he shifted from place to place, and from kingdom to kingdom; became known to the Admiral de Ruyter, and was the soul of every desperate plot.

In particular, about 1665, Mr. Blood was one of a revolutionary committee, or secret council, which continued its sittings, notwithstanding that government knew of its meetings. For their security, they had about thirty stout fellows posted around the place where they met in the nature of a *corps de garde*. It fell out, that two of the members of the council, to save themselves,

and perhaps for the sake of a reward, betrayed all their transactions to the ministry, which Mr. Blood soon suspected, and in a short time got to the bottom of the whole affair. He appointed these two persons to meet him at a tavern in the city, where he had his guard ready, who secured them without any noise, and carried them to a private place provided for the purpose, where he called a kind of court-martial, before whom they were tried, found guilty, and sentenced to be shot two days after in the same place. When the time appointed came, they were brought out, and all the necessary preparations made for putting the sentence in execution; and the poor men, seeing no hopes of escape, disposed themselves to suffer as well as they could. At this critical juncture, Mr. Blood was graciously pleased to grant them his pardon, and at the same time advised them to go to their new master, tell him all that had happened, and request him, in the name of their old confederates, to be as favourable to such of them as should at any time stand in need of his mercy. Whether these unfortunate people carried Mr. Blood's message to the king, does not anywhere appear. It is however certain, that not long after the whole conspiracy was discovered; in consequence of which, on the 26th of April, 1666, Col. John Rathbone, and some other officers of the late disbanded army, were tried and convicted at the Old Bailey for a plot to surprise the Tower, and to kill General Monk.

After his concern with this desperate conclave, who were chiefly fanatics and Fifth-Monarchy men, Blood exchanged the scene for Scotland, where he mingled among the Cameronians, and must have been a most acceptable associate to John Balfour of Burley, or any other who joined the insurgents more out of spleen or desire of plunder, than from religious motives. The writers of the sect seem to have thought his name a discredit, or perhaps did not know it; nevertheless, it is affirmed in a pamphlet written by a person who seems to have been well acquainted with the incidents of his life, that he shared the dangers of the defeat at Pentland Hills, 27th November, 1666, in which the Cameronians were totally routed. After the engagement, he found his way again to Ireland, but was hunted out of Ulster by Lord Dungannon, who pursued him very closely. On his return to England, he made himself again notorious by an exploit, of

which the very singular particulars are contained in the pamphlet already mentioned.* The narrative runs as follows:—"Among the persons apprehended for the late fanatic conspiracy, was one Captain Mason, a person for whom Mr. Blood had a particular affection and friendship. This person was to be removed from London to one of the northern counties, in order to his trial at the assizes; and to that intent was sent down with eight of the Duke's troop to guard him, being reckoned to be a person bold and courageous. Mr. Blood having notice of this journey, resolves by the way to rescue his friend. The prisoner and his guard went away in the morning, and Mr. Blood having made choice of three more of his acquaintance, set forward the same day at night, without boots, upon small horses, and their pistols in their trowsers, to prevent suspicion. But opportunities are not so easily had, neither were all places convenient, so that the convoy and their prisoner were gone a good way beyond Newark, before Mr. Blood and his friends had any scent of their prisoner. At one place, they set a sentinel to watch his coming by; but whether it was out of fear, or that the person was tired with a tedious expectation, the sentinel brought them no tidings either of the prisoner or his guard, insomuch that Mr. Blood and his companions began to think their friend so far before them upon the road, that it would be in vain to follow him. Yet not willing to give over an enterprise so generously undertaken, upon Mr. Blood's encouragement, they rode on, though despairing of success, till finding it grow towards evening, and meeting with a convenient inn upon the road, in a small village not far from Doncaster, they resolved to lie there all night, and return for London the next morning. In that inn they had not sat long in a room next the street, condoling among themselves the ill success of such a tedious journey, and the misfortune of their friend, before the convoy came thundering up to the door of the said inn with their prisoner, Captain Mason having made choice of that inn, as being the best known to him, to give his guardians the refreshment of a dozen of drink. There Mr. Blood, unseen, had a full view of his friend, and of the persons he had to deal with. He had bespoke a small supper, which was at the fire, so that he had but very little time for consultation, finding that Captain

* Remarks on the Life of the famed Mr. Blood. London, 1680. Folio.

Mason's party did not intend to alight. On this account he only gave general directions to his associates to follow his example in whatever they saw him do. In haste, therefore, they called for their horses, and threw down their money for their reckoning, telling the woman of the house, that since they had met with such good company, they were resolved to go forward. Captain Mason went off first upon a sorry beast, and with him the commander of the party, and four more; the rest staid behind to make an end of their liquor. Then away marched one more single, and in a very small time after the last two. By this time, Mr. Blood and one of his friends being horsed, followed the two that were hindmost, and soon overtook them. These four rode some little time together, Mr. Blood on the right hand of the two soldiers, and his friend on the left. But upon a sudden, Mr. Blood laid hold of the reins of the horse next him, while his friend, in observation to his directions, did the same on the other hand; and having presently by surprise dismounted the soldiers, pulled off their bridles, and sent their horses to pick their grass where they pleased. These two being thus made sure of, Mr. Blood pursues his game, intending to have reached the single trooper; but he being got to the rest of his fellows, now reduced to six, and a barber of York, that travelled in their company, Mr. Blood made up, heads the whole party, and stops them; of which some of the foremost, looking upon him to be either drunk or mad, thought the rebuke of a switch to be a sufficient chastisement of such a rash presumption, which they exercised with more contempt than fury, till, by the rudeness of his compliments in return, he gave them to understand he was not in jest, but in very good earnest. He was soon seconded by his friend that was with him in his first exploit; but there had been several rough blows dealt between the unequal number of six to two, before Mr. Blood's two other friends came up to their assistance; nay, I may safely say six to two; for the barber of York, whether out of his natural propensity to the sport, or that his pot-valiantness had made him so generous as to help his fellow-travellers, would needs show his valour at the beginning of the fray; but better had he been at the latter end of a feast; for though he showed his prudence to take the stronger side, as he guessed by the number, yet because he would take no warning, which was often

given him, not to put himself to the hazard of losing a guitar-finger by meddling in a business that nothing concerned him, he lost his life, as they were forced to dispatch him, in the first place, for giving them a needless trouble. The barber, being become an useless instrument, and the other of Mr. Blood's friends being come up, the skirmish began to be very smart, the four assailants having singled out their champions as fairly and equally as they could. All this while, Captain Mason, being rode before upon his thirty-shilling steed, wondering his guard came not with him, looked back, and observing a combustion, and that they were altogether by the ears, knew not what to think. He conjectured it at first to have been some intrigue upon him, as if the troopers had a design to tempt him to an escape, which might afterwards prove more to his prejudice; just like cats, that, with regardless scorn, seem to give the distressed mouse all the liberty in the world to get away out of their paws, but soon recover their prey again at one jump. Thereupon, unwilling to undergo the hazard of such a trial, he comes back, at which time Mr. Blood cried out to him, Horse, horse, quickly! an alarm so amazing at first, that he could not believe it to be his friend's voice when he heard it; but as the thoughts of military men are soon summoned together, and never hold Spanish councils, the Captain presently settled his resolution, mounts the next horse that wanted a rider, and puts it in for a share of his own self-preservation. In this bloody conflict Mr. Blood was three times unhorsed, occasioned by his forgetfulness, as having omitted to new girt his saddle, which the ostler had unloosed upon the wadding at his first coming into the inn. Being then so often dismounted, and not knowing the reason, which the occasion would not give him leave to consider, he resolved to fight it out on foot; of which two of the soldiers taking the advantage, singled him out, and drove him into a court-yard, where he made a stand with a full body, his sword in one hand, and his pistol in the other. One of the soldiers taking that advantage of his open body, shot him near the shoulder-blade of his pistol arm, at which time he had four other bullets in his body, that he had received before; which the soldier observing, flung his discharged pistol at him with that good aim and violence, that he hit him a stunning blow just under the forehead, upon the upper part of the nose between the eyes,

which for the present so amazed him, that he gave himself over for a dead man; yet resolving to give one sparring blow before he expired, such is the strange provocation and success of despair, with one vigorous stroke of his sword, he brought his adversary with a vengeance from his horse, and laid him in a far worse condition than himself at his horse's feet. At that time, full of anger and revenge, he was just going to make an end of his conquest, by giving him the fatal stab, but that in the very nick of time, Captain Mason, having, by the help of his friends, done his business where they had fought, by the death of some and the disabling of others that opposed them, came in, and bid him hold and spare the life of one that had been the civilest person to him upon the road,—a fortunate piece of kindness in the one, and of gratitude in the other; which Mr. Blood easily condescending to, by the joint assistance of the Captain, the other soldier was soon mastered, and the victory, after a sharp fight, that lasted above two hours, was at length completed. You may be sure the fight was well maintained on both sides, while two of the soldiers, besides the barber, were slain upon the place, three unhorsed, and the rest wounded. And it was observable, that though the encounter happened in a village, where a great number of people were spectators of the combat, yet none would adventure the rescue of either party, as not knowing which was in the wrong, or which in the right, and were therefore wary of being arbitrators in such a desperate contest, where they saw the reward of assistance to be nothing but present death. After the combat was over, Mr. Blood and his friends divided themselves, and parted several ways."

Before he had engaged in this adventure, Blood had placed his wife and son in an apothecary's shop at Rumford, under the name of Weston. He himself afterwards affected to practise as a physician under that of Ayliffe, under which guise he remained concealed until his wounds were cured, and the hue and cry against him and his accomplices was somewhat abated.

In the meantime, this extraordinary man, whose spirits toiled in framing the most daring enterprises, had devised a plot, which, as it respected the person at whom it was aimed, was of a much more ambitious character than that for the delivery of Mason. It had for its object the seizure of the person of the Duke of

Ormond, his ancient enemy, in the streets of London. In this some have thought he only meant to gratify his resentment, while others suppose that he might hope to extort some important advantages by detaining his Grace in his hands as a prisoner. The Duke's historian, Carte, gives the following account of this extraordinary enterprise:—"The Prince of Orange came this year (1670) into England, and being invited, on Dec. 6, to an entertainment in the city of London, his Grace attended him thither. As he was returning homewards in a dark night, and going up St. James's Street, at the end of which, facing the palace, stood Clarendon House, where he then lived, he was attacked by Blood and five of his accomplices. The Duke always used to go attended with six footmen; but as they were too heavy a load to ride upon a coach, he always had iron spikes behind it to keep them from getting up; and continued this practice to his dying day, even after this attempt of assassination. These six footmen used to walk on both sides of the street, over against the coach; but by some contrivance or other, they were all stopped and out of the way, when the Duke was taken out of his coach by Blood and his son, and mounted on horseback behind one of the horsemen in his company. The coachman drove on to Clarendon House, and told the porter that the Duke had been seized by two men, who had carried him down Pickadilly. The porter immediately ran that way, and Mr. James Clarke chancing to be at that time in the court of the house, followed with all possible haste, having first alarmed the family, and ordered the servants to come after him as fast as they could. Blood, it seems, either to gratify the humour of his patron, who had set him upon this work, or to glut his own revenge by putting his Grace to the same ignominious death, which his accomplices in the treasonable design upon Dublin Castle had suffered, had taken a strong fancy into his head to hang the Duke at Tyburn. Nothing could have saved his Grace's life, but that extravagant imagination and passion of the villain, who, leaving the Duke mounted and buckled to one of his comrades, rode on before, and (as is said) actually tied a rope to the gallows, and then rode back to see what was become of his accomplices, whom he met riding off in a great hurry. The horseman to whom the Duke was tied, was a person of great strength, but

being embarrassed by his Grace's struggling, could not advance as fast as he desired. He was, however, got a good way beyond Berkeley (now Devonshire) House, towards Knightsbridge, when the Duke, having got his foot under the man's, unhorsed him, and they both fell down together in the mud, where they were struggling, when the porter and Mr. Clarke came up. The villain then disengaged himself, and seeing the neighbourhood alarmed, and numbers of people running towards them, got on horseback, and having, with one of his comrades, fired their pistols at the Duke (but missed him, as taking their aim in the dark, and in a hurry), rode off as fast as they could to save themselves. The Duke (now sixty years of age) was quite spent with struggling, so that when Mr. Clarke and the porter came up, they knew him rather by feeling his star, than by any sound of voice he could utter; and they were forced to carry him home, and lay him on a bed to recover his spirits. He received some wounds and bruises in the struggle, which confined him within doors for some days. The King, when he heard of this intended assassination of the Duke of Ormond, expressed a great resentment on that occasion, and issued out a proclamation for the discovery and apprehension of the miscreants concerned in the attempt."

Blood, however, lay concealed, and, with his usual success, escaped apprehension. While thus lurking, he entertained and digested an exploit, evincing the same atrocity which had characterized the undertakings he had formerly been engaged in; there was also to be traced in his new device something of that peculiar disposition which inclined him to be desirous of adding to the murder of the Duke of Ormond, the singular infamy of putting him to death at Tyburn. With something of the same spirit, he now resolved to shew his contempt of monarchy, and all its symbols, by stealing the crown, sceptre, and other articles of the regalia out of the office in which they were deposited, and enriching himself and his needy associates with the produce of the spoils. This feat, by which Blood is now chiefly remembered, is, like all his transactions, marked with a daring strain of courage and duplicity, and like most of his undertakings, was very likely to have proved successful. John Bayley, Esq. in his History and Antiquities of the Tower of London, gives the following distinct

account of this curious exploit. At this period, Sir Gilbert Talbot was Keeper, as it was called, of the Jewel House.

"It was soon after the appointment of Sir Gilbert Talbot, that the Regalia in the Tower first became objects of public inspection, which King Charles allowed in consequence of the reduction in the emoluments of the master's office. The profits which arose from shewing the jewels to strangers, Sir Gilbert assigned in lieu of a salary, to the person whom he had appointed to the care of them. This was an old confidential servant of his father's, one Talbot Edwards, whose name is handed down to posterity as keeper of the regalia, when the notorious attempt to steal the crown was made in the year 1673; the following account of which is chiefly derived from a relation which Mr. Edwards himself made of the transaction.

"About three weeks before this audacious villain Blood made his attempt upon the crown, he came to the Tower in the habit of a parson, with a long cloak, cassock, and canonical girdle, accompanied by a woman, whom he called his wife. They desired to see the regalia, and, just as their wishes had been gratified, the lady feigned sudden indisposition; this called forth the kind offices of Mrs. Edwards, the keeper's wife, who, having courteously invited her into their house to repose herself, she soon recovered, and on their departure, professed themselves thankful for this civility. A few days after, Blood came again, bringing a present to Mrs. Edwards, of four pairs of white gloves from his pretended wife; and having thus begun the acquaintance, they made frequent visits to improve it. After a short respite of their compliments, the disguised ruffian returned again; and in conversation with Mrs. Edwards, said that his wife could discourse of nothing but the kindness of those good people in the Tower—that she had long studied, and at length bethought herself of a handsome way of requital. You have, quoth he, a pretty young gentlewoman for your daughter, and I have a young nephew, who has two or three hundred a-year in land, and is at my disposal. If your daughter be free, and you approve it, I'll bring him here to see her, and we will endeavour to make it a match. This was easily assented to by old Mr. Edwards, who invited the parson to dine with him on that day; he readily accepted the invitation; and taking upon him to say grace, performed it

with great seeming devotion, and casting up his eyes, concluded it with a prayer for the King, Queen, and royal family. After dinner, he went up to see the rooms, and observing a handsome case of pistols hang there, expressed a great desire to buy them, to present to a young lord, who was his neighbour; a pretence by which he thought of disarming the house against the period intended for the execution of his design. At his departure, which was a canonical benediction of the good company, he appointed a day and hour to bring his nephew to see his mistress, which was the very day that he made his daring attempt. The good old gentleman had got up ready to receive his guest, and the daughter was in her best dress to entertain her expected lover; when, behold, Parson Blood, with three more, came to the jewel-house, all armed with rapier-blades in their canes, and every one a dagger, and a brace of pocket-pistols. Two of his companions entered in with him, on pretence of seeing the crown, and the third staid at the door, as if to look after the young lady, a jewel of a more charming description, but in reality as a watch. The daughter, who thought it not modest to come down till she was called, sent the maid to take a view of the company, and bring a description of her gallant; and the servant, conceiving that he was the intended bridegroom who staid at the door, being the youngest of the party, returned to soothe the anxiety of her young mistress with the idea she had formed of his person. Blood told Mr. Edwards that they would not go up stairs till his wife came, and desired him to shew his friends the crown to pass the time till then; and they had no sooner entered the room, and the door, as usual, shut, than a cloak was thrown over the old man's head, and a gag put in his mouth. Thus secured, they told him that their resolution was to have the crown, globe, and sceptre; and, if he would quietly submit to it, they would spare his life; otherwise he was to expect no mercy. He thereupon endeavoured to make all the noise he possibly could, to be heard above; they then knocked him down with a wooden mallet, and told him, that, if yet he would lie quietly, they would spare his life; but if not, upon his next attempt to discover them, they would kill him. Mr. Edwards, however, according to his own account, was not intimidated by this threat, but strained himself to make the greater noise, and in consequence, received several

s blows on the head with the mallet, and was stabbed in the r; this again brought the poor old man to the ground, where ay for some time in so senseless a state, that one of the ins pronounced him dead. Edwards had come a little to elf, and hearing this, lay quietly, conceiving it best to be ght so. The booty was now to be disposed of, and one of ı, named Parrot, secreted the orb. Blood held the crown ır his cloak; and the third was about to file the sceptre in in order that it might be placed in a bag, brought for that ose; but, fortunately, the son of Mr. Edwards, who had in Flanders with Sir John Talbot, and on his landing in land, had obtained leave to come away post to visit his ır, happened to arrive whilst this scene was acting; and on ng to the door, the person that stood sentinel, asked with n he would speak; to which he answered, that he belonged e house; and, perceiving the person to be a stranger, told that if he had any business with his father that he would aint him with it, and so hastened up stairs to salute his ls. This unexpected accident spread confusion amongst the r, and they instantly decamped with the crown and orb, ng the sceptre yet unfiled. The aged keeper now raised elf upon his legs, forced the gag from his mouth, and cried, son! murder! which being heard by his daughter, who was, aps, anxiously expecting far other sounds, ran out and eated the cry. The alarm now became general, and young ards and his brother-in-law, Captain Beckman, ran after the ırators, whom a warder put himself in a position to stop, but l discharged a pistol at him, and he fell, although unhurt, he thieves proceeded safely to the next post, where one Sill, had been a soldier under Cromwell, stood sentinel; but he d no opposition, and they accordingly passed the drawbridge. es were waiting for them at St. Catherine's gate; and as ran that way along the Tower wharf, they themselves cried Stop the rogues! by which they passed on unsuspected, till ain Beckman overtook them. At his head Blood fired ıer pistol, but missed him, and was seized. Under the cloak s daring villain was found the crown, and, although he saw elf a prisoner, he had yet the impudence to struggle for his ; and when it was finally wrested from him, said, It was a

gallant attempt, however unsuccessful; it was for a crown! Parrot, who had formerly served under General Harrison, was also taken; but Hunt, Blood's son-in-law, reached his horse and rode off, as did two other of the thieves; but he was soon afterwards stopped, and likewise committed to custody. In this struggle and confusion, the great pearl, a large diamond, and several smaller stones, were lost from the crown; but the two former, and some of the latter, were afterwards found and restored; and the Ballas ruby, broken off the sceptre, being found in Parrot's pocket, nothing considerable was eventually missing.

"As soon as the prisoners were secured, young Edwards hastened to Sir Gilbert Talbot, who was then master and treasurer of the Jewel House, and gave him an account of the transaction. Sir Gilbert instantly went to the King, and acquainted his majesty with it; and his majesty commanded him to proceed forthwith to the Tower, to see how matters stood; to take the examination of Blood and the others; and to return and report it to him. Sir Gilbert accordingly went; but the King in the meantime was persuaded by some about him, to hear the examination himself, and the prisoners were in consequence sent for to Whitehall; a circumstance which is supposed to have saved these daring wretches from the gallows."

On his examination under such an atrocious charge, Blood audaciously replied "that he would never betray an associate, or defend himself at the expense of uttering a falsehood." He even averred, perhaps, more than was true against himself, when he confessed that he had lain concealed among the reeds for the purpose of killing the King with a carabine, while Charles was bathing; but he pretended that on this occasion his purpose was disconcerted by a secret awe,—appearing to verify the allegation in Shakspeare, "There's such divinity doth hedge a king, that treason can but peep to what it would, acts little of its will." To this story, true or false, Blood added a declaration that he was at the head of a numerous following, disbanded soldiers and others, who, from motives of religion, were determined to take the life of the King, as the only obstacle to their obtaining freedom of worship and liberty of conscience. These men, he said, would be determined, by his execution, to persist in the resolution of

putting Charles to death; whereas, he averred that, by sparing his life, the King might disarm a hundred poniards directed against his own. This view of the case made a strong impression on Charles, whose selfishness was uncommonly acute: yet he felt the impropriety of pardoning the attempt upon the life of the Duke of Ormond, and condescended to ask that faithful servant's permission, before he would exert his authority, to spare the assassin. Ormond answered, that if the King chose to pardon the attempt to steal his crown, he himself might easily consent that the attempt upon his life, as a crime of much less importance, should also be forgiven. Charles, accordingly, not only gave Blood a pardon, but endowed him with a pension of £500 a-year; which led many persons to infer, not only that the King wished to preserve himself from the future attempts of this desperate man, but that he had it also in view to secure the services of so determined a ruffian, in case he should have an opportunity of employing him in his own line of business. There is a striking contrast between the fate of Blood, pensioned and rewarded for this audacious attempt, and that of the faithful Edwards, who may be safely said to have sacrificed his life in defence of the property intrusted to him! In remuneration for his fidelity and his sufferings, Edwards only obtained a grant of £200 from the Exchequer, with £100 to his son; but so little pains were taken about the regular discharge of these donatives, that the parties entitled to them were glad to sell them for half the sum. After this wonderful escape from justice, Blood seems to have affected the airs of a person in favour, and was known to solicit the suits of many of the old republican party, for whom he is said to have gained considerable indulgences, when the old cavaliers, who had ruined themselves in the cause of Charles the First, could obtain neither countenance nor restitution. During the ministry called the Cabal, he was high in favour with the Duke of Buckingham; till upon their declension his favour began also to fail, and we find him again engaged in opposition to the Court. Blood was not likely to lie idle amid the busy intrigues and factions which succeeded the celebrated discovery of Oates. He appears to have passed again into violent opposition to the Court, but his steps were no longer so sounding as to be heard above his contemporaries. North hints at his being involved in

a plot against his former friend and patron the Duke of Buckingham. The passage is quoted at length in Note C, page 343.

The Plot, it appears, consisted in an attempt to throw some scandalous imputation upon the Duke of Buckingham, for a conspiracy to effect which, Edward Christian, Arthur O'Brien, and Thomas Blood, were indicted in the King's Bench, and found guilty, 25th June, 1680. The damages sued for were laid as high as ten thousand pounds, for which Colonel Blood found bail. But he appears to have been severely affected in health, as, 24th August, 1680, he departed this life in a species of lethargy. It is remarkable enough that the story of his death and funeral was generally regarded as fabricated, preparative to some exploit of his own; nay, so general was this report, that the coroner caused his body to be raised, and a jury to sit upon it, for the purpose of ensuring that the celebrated Blood had at length undergone the common fate of mankind. There was found unexpected difficulty in proving that the miserable corpse before the jury was that of the celebrated conspirator. It was at length recognized by some of his acquaintances, who swore to the preternatural size of the thumb, so that the coroner, convinced of the identity, remanded this once active, and now quiet person, to his final rest in Tothill-fields.

Such were the adventures of an individual, whose real exploits, whether the motive, the danger, or the character of the enterprises be considered, equal, or rather surpass, those fictions of violence and peril which we love to peruse in romance. They cannot, therefore, be deemed foreign to a work dedicated, like the present, to the preservation of extraordinary occurrences, whether real or fictitious.

Note G, p. 335.

This little piece of superstition was suggested by the following incident. The Author of Waverley happened to be standing by with other gentlemen, while the captain of the Selkirk Yeomanry was purchasing a horse for the use of his trumpeter. The animal offered was a handsome one, and neither the officer, who was an excellent jockey, nor any one present, could see any imperfection

in wind or limb. But a person happened to pass, who was asked to give an opinion. This man was called Blind Willie, who drove a small trade in cattle and horses, and what seemed as extraordinary, in watches, notwithstanding his having been born blind. He was accounted to possess a rare judgment in these subjects of traffic. So soon as he had examined the horse in question, he immediately pronounced it to have something of his own complaint, and in plain words, stated it to be blind, or verging upon that imperfection, which was found to be the case on close examination. None present had suspected this fault in the animal; which is not wonderful, considering that it may frequently exist, without any appearance in the organ affected. Blind Willie, being asked how he made a discovery imperceptible to so many gentlemen who had their eyesight, explained, that after feeling the horse's limbs, he laid one hand on its heart, and drew the other briskly across the animal's eyes, when finding no increase of pulsation, in consequence of the latter motion, he had come to the conclusion that the horse must be blind.

END OF PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.